

TOP STORY: LABOR'S UNEASY ROMANCE WITH BILL CLINTON

November 1-14, 1993

IN THESE TIMES

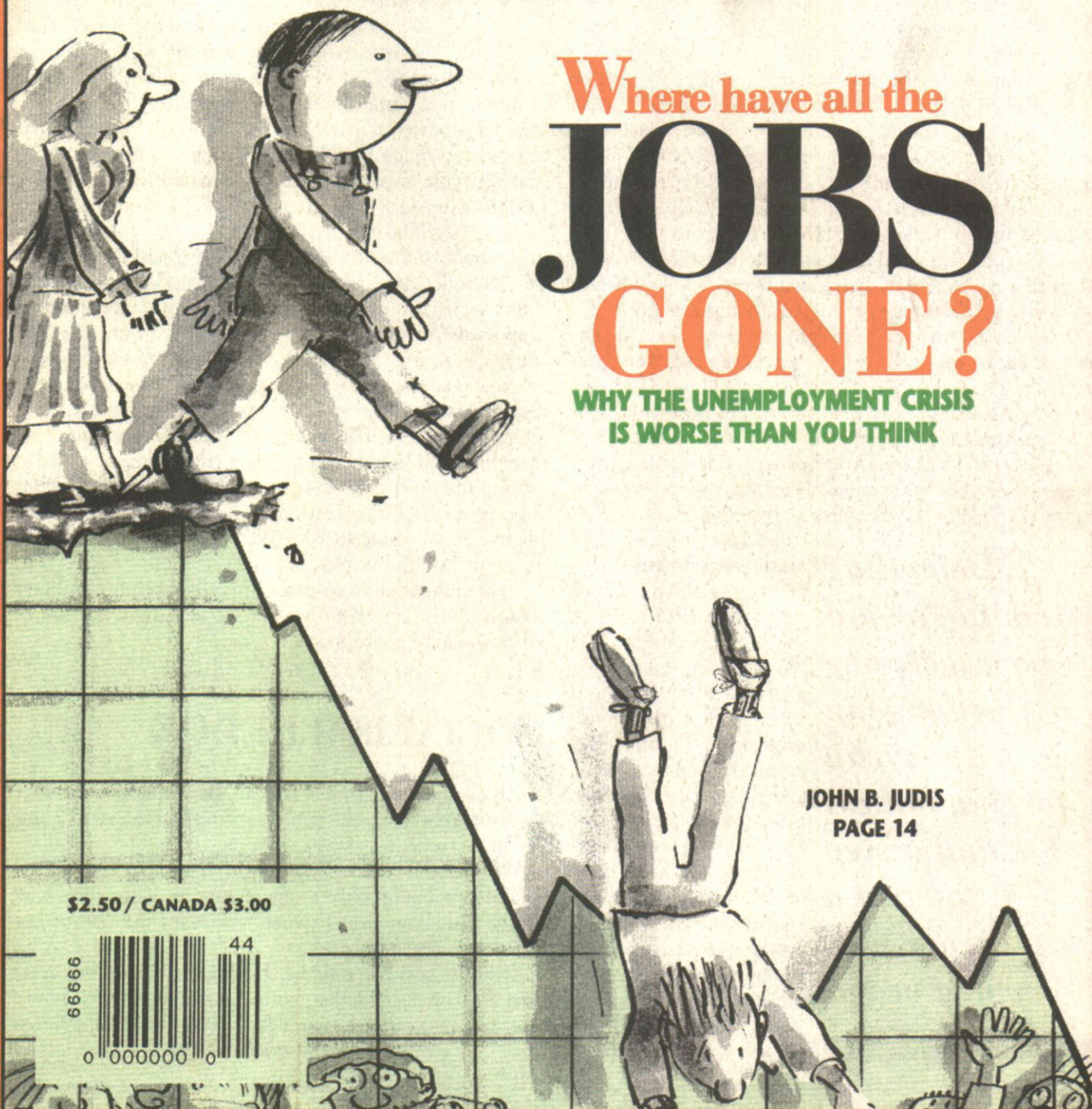
the alternative newsmagazine

Where have all the JOBS GONE?

WHY THE UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS
IS WORSE THAN YOU THINK

JOHN B. JUDIS
PAGE 14

\$2.50 / CANADA \$3.00



E D I T O R I A L**IT'S TIME TO DEFEND
DEMOCRACY IN HAITI**

It's no surprise that Senate Republican Leader Robert Dole doesn't want to see Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide back in power. The Rev. Aristide is, after all, a liberation theologian feared and hated by the Pope and by Haiti's tiny elite and its military apparatus. Nor has Aristide, ousted in a September 1991 coup, hesitated to tell it like it is. It was, he wrote, "the cold country to our north and the man in Rome [who] were dictating strategy" to the military junta that ruled Haiti before Aristide's election—and who rule it once again today.

Dole says, "I wouldn't risk any American lives to put Aristide back in power and try to force democracy on Haiti where there's no real record of democracy in the past." But what Dole doesn't say is that the lack of democracy is a legacy of American domination of that island nation.

As early as 1891, an American president, Benjamin Harrison, sent the Marines into Haiti "to protect American lives and property ... when negro laborers got out of control," as an official 1961 State Department document put it. And for 19 years, from 1915 to 1934, the U.S. occupied Haiti "to maintain order during a period of chronic and threatened insurrection," according to the same document. During these years, under the protection of the U.S. Marines, the tiny elite of French-speaking, light-skinned, Catholic and mostly foreign-educated Haitians consolidated their power and established the system that Aristide now threatens to overturn.

The idea that, as a matter of principle, Dole

***Defending
Aristide would
be a welcome
change in
American
foreign policy;
and a step
toward a
truly new
world order.***

opposes risking American lives in undemocratic countries is ludicrous on its face. He was one of the cheerleaders for Reagan's invasion of Grenada and for Bush's invasion of Panama. Indeed, the difference between those adventures and the situation in Haiti is that for the first time the United States is committed—in word if not deed—to helping restore a leader who was overwhelmingly elected against the wishes of the country's ruling class.

In short, U.S. support of Aristide is a break from more than a century-long tradition of thwarting democracy in this hemisphere. Fear of democracy in Haiti led the Bush administration to give only lip service to Aristide. Clinton bartered an agreement to return Aristide to power. But the White House's

reluctance to abandon its traditional friends in Haiti led to a humiliating compromise for Aristide in which the officers who ousted him were given amnesty. Even that has proven too much for Haiti's elite, which understands all too well just how profoundly it is hated by the Haitian people—and just how threatening a government led by Aristide might be to its power.

It would be a welcome change if the Clinton administration defended democracy in Haiti with the same determination shown by previous administrations in defending oppressive ruling classes in the Caribbean and Central America. And it could be done without the violations of international law that were the hallmarks of the Reagan and Bush years. President Aristide was elected by more than 70 percent of the Haitian electorate. The military junta that overthrew him is now conducting a reign of terror aimed at wiping out Aristide's network of political support. In this situation, the Organization of American States (OAS) should be called together to take decisive action in defense of its ostensible principles.

Restoring Aristide to power may not require military action. But if agreed to by Aristide and the OAS, use of force would be appropriate.

SOCIALISM REDUX

A year ago, socialism was dead, or so the pundits said. Free-market capitalism reigned supreme in the East as in the West, everyone (who was anyone) agreed.

We disagreed. We suggested that while the reaction against communism had swept all aspects of socialism with it, the pendulum would swing back when the cost of free marketism began to be felt.

Over the past two months, in Poland and now in Greece (see story on page 8), that return has begun. There is now a "social democratic" government in Poland, and the Greek socialist party is back in power. Stay tuned. ◀

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

Editor: James Weinstein
Managing Editor: Miles Harvey
Sorter Editors: Patricia Aufderheide,
 David Moberg, Salim Muwakkil
Asst. Managing Editor/Books Editor:
 David Futrelle
In Person Editor: Joel Bleifuss
European Editor: Diana Johnstone
New York Editor: Daniel Lazare
Education Editor: Alex Molnar
Contributing Editors: Peter Karman,
 Ilan Stavans, Jim McNeill
Washington Correspondents:
 John Canham-Clyne, John B. Judis
Eastern Europe Correspondent:
 Paul Hockenros
Far East Correspondent: Dave Lindorff
Film Critics: Pat Dowell, Patricia Aufderheide
Copy Editor: George Hodak
Typo: Jim Rinnert
Editorial Interns: Susan Kimmelman,
 Beate Sissenich, Jake Blankenship

Art Director: Peter Hannan
Associate Art Director: Lisa Weinstein
Asst. Art Director/Photographer: David Schulz
Cartoonist: Terry LaBan

Publisher: James Weinstein
Associate Publisher: Beth Schulman
Business Manager: Robert Larson
Circulation Director: Etelka Lehoczky
Advertising Director: Bruce Embrey
Office Manager: Theresa Nutall
Fulfillment Manager: Greg Kilbane

(ISSN 0160-5992)

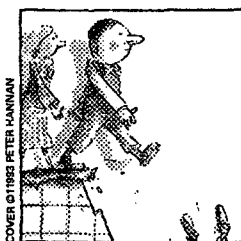
Published 26 times a year by the Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 772-0100. Member: Alternative Press Syndicate. The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright © 1993 by the Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Copies of *In These Times* contract with the National Writers Union are available upon request. Complete issues and volumes of *In These Times* are available from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, MI. Selected articles are available on 4-track cassette from Freedom Ideas International, 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217. All rights reserved. *In These Times* is indexed in both the Alternative Press Index and the Left Index. Publisher does not assume liability for unsolicited manuscripts or material. Manuscripts or material unaccompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope will not be returned. All correspondence should be sent to: *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. Subscriptions are \$34.95 a year (\$59 for institutions; \$61.95 Canada; \$75.95 overseas). For customer service and to place subscription orders, call toll free: (800) 827-0270. Advertising rates sent on request. Available back issues are \$5 each; specify volume and number. All letters received by *In These Times* become property of the newspaper. We reserve the right to print letters in condensed form. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Dabs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054. This issue (Vol. 17, No. 25) published November 1, 1993, for newsstand sales November 1 - 14, 1993.



InTHESETIMES

CONTENTS

Volume 17, Number 25



No Help Wanted
Why the unemployment crisis is worse than you think.

JOHN B. JUDIS

14

Stand by your man
Labor's uneasy romance with Bill Clinton.

DAVID MOBERG

20

Crime, race and candor

How our racial evasions empower the demagogues.

SALIM MUWAKKIL

24

FEATURES

- An education in democratic politics in Texas** · John Gardner.....17
Dialogue: Mourning NAFTA · Robert Lehman.....27
Viewpoint: Second thoughts on Mideast peace · Sam Bahour28

REVIEWS

- Film: A charred Remains of the Day** · Pat Dowell.....30
Books: Dying of consumption · David Futrelle32
Down in the dumpster · Steven G. Keilman34

DEPARTMENTS

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Letters4 | In Person · Sara Corbett.....10 |
| Sylvia · Nicole Hollander4 | Etc. · Miles Harvey.....10 |
| In Short6 | First Stone · Joel Bleifuss.....12 |
| Appall-O-Meter · Woody Igou.....6 | Huge Mouth · Peter Hannan13 |
| Media Beat · Pat Aufderheide8 | Classifieds37 |
| Rough Cuts · J.A. Reid9 | |

LETTERS

Bad deal

In his agonized endorsement of NAFTA (*ITT*, Oct 4), John Judis sides with the cleverer of the Clinton administration spinners. He makes a minimalist claim for Bush's pact, arguing that it's marginally preferable to the status quo and that its defeat will only lead to continuation of current trends without the safeguards provided by the Clinton side agreements.

Judis' argument buys the *Washington Post*-prompted threat from Mexican President Carlos Salinas: that this NAFTA is our only chance in a generation for any agreement. That's just more up-or-down fast-trackism, and most likely a bluff. Why wouldn't the next Mexican administration be interested in a revised trade agreement, especially since the U.S. will be negotiating similar agreements with other Latin American countries?

NAFTA is a precedent—another good reason for rejecting such a flawed deal. Most opponents favor some agreement that would allow expanded trade, harmonize labor and environmental standards upward, and include a link to democratization and human rights. But NAFTA as it now stands makes no effort to raise standards, and it completely ignores democracy and human rights. If it passes, labor market reform in Mexico is buried. Likewise the chance for better agreements with other countries.

Passing NAFTA would be worse than the status quo. It would be step one toward enforceable trade rules throughout the hemisphere based on a low-wage competitiveness strategy and explicit deregulatory pressures that supersede national and local policies. Defeating it and working for fairer trade arrangements is the best way to build on the most promising, if confus-

ing, progressive development around: the new alliance formed in the U.S. and across borders to oppose NAFTA.

Brian Ahlberg

Legislative assistant to
Sen. Paul Wellstone (D-MN)
Washington

Advertising violence

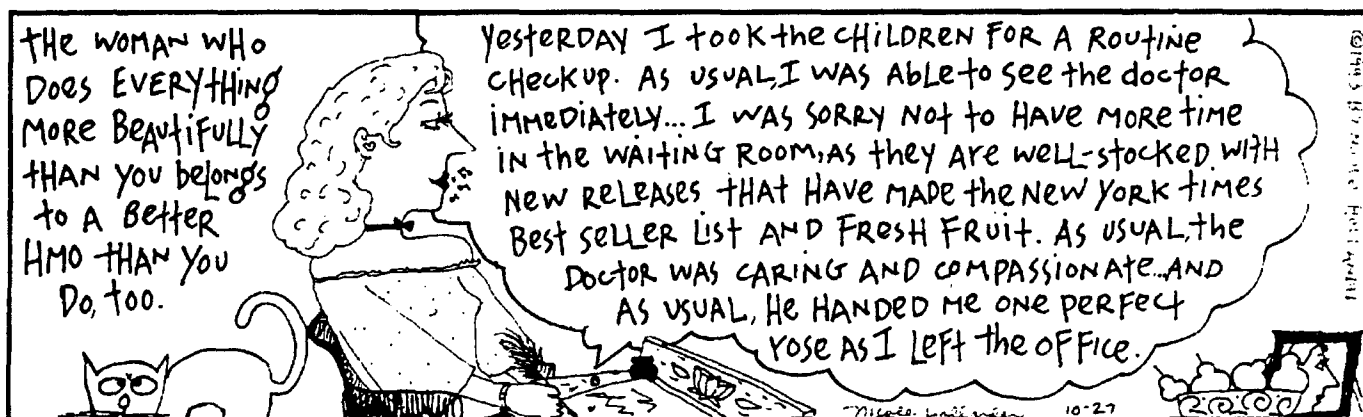
I find it hard to believe that Mike Males, "Public Enemy Number One?" (*ITT*, Sept. 20), thinks what people see on TV has no influence on their thoughts or behavior. If this is true, why does TV devote so much time to advertising?

I support those taking action against TV violence because the media is one of the major players in promoting violence in real life. Let's stop preaching that curbing the TV industry's right to pour out their garbage is a breach of their First Amendment rights. If big money was not involved, it wouldn't be produced.

Males neglects to mention the largest promoter of violence. He cites poverty, racism, child abuse and other social problems but says nothing about government's unrestrained use of military force to achieve political objectives. In *The Godfather*, the character played by Al Pacino tells his wife that since the U.S. president has people killed, it's all right for him to do the same. If

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



government creates a climate of aggression, what is to restrain the average lunatic?

I agree that we have to examine the social causes of violence. But holding the media accountable for their actions is not scapegoating.

Carl V. Archambeau
Grand Ledge, Mich.

One-dimensional

Thoughtful analysis is a characteristic of Salim Muwakkil's work, but I was disappointed in Muwakkil's piece on "the anti-rap backlash by the black middle class" (*ITT*, Oct. 4), in which he reduces the complex mix of class, age and gender introduced by his thesis into a simplistic formula utilized all too often by the left, i.e., members of whatever privileged category happens to be at issue in a particular inquiry are by definition without legitimate viewpoints. End of inquiry.

Much of the criticism rap receives is deserved, regardless of the social and artistic value of the genre. And members of the black middle class (or the "buppie set," as Muwakkil might say) are not the only critics. Many working-class blacks criticize rap as well. The older the person in both of these groups, the more likely they are to be critical. Gender plays a role across the board: females—whatever their age or class—are more likely to be critical than males. Muwakkil fell short of the mark in extracting from this demographic milieu a one-dimensional definition of rap critics.

T. Bruce
Ithaca, N.Y.

Anti-rap gap

The indignation in the black middle-class backlash against rap music (*ITT*, Oct. 4) is directed at the disrespect exhibited toward black women. Notably, the anti-rappers limit their concern to black women and do not consider the violent male chauvinism a threat to all women. Nor do they

extend their indignation to a recognition of the alarming statistics of rapes committed by black men.

The failure of the anti-rappers to object to rap homophobia (including calls to kill gays) and blatant anti-Asian and anti-Semitic racism exemplifies how black nationalism contributes to the trend toward a "Bosnification" of our nation.

A contrast between jazz and rap, both representations of popular black culture, illuminates how Afro-American culture has been evolving. Rap may be an appropriate musical expression in South Florida and for those responsible for the death of more than 50 people in the Los Angeles riots (victims about whom no one seems to express any compassion) and for the rampaging and lynching in Crown Heights.

The limited and parochial attack on rap indicates that the black community has a long way to go before undertaking a comprehensive and bold attack on the problems that community must lead the way in correcting. As politically incorrect as the suggestion may appear: maybe the black community can learn something by studying the experiences and achievements of other minorities.

Arthur D. Kahn
Brooklyn, N.Y.

All too real

David Wrenn's Viewpoint article, "Deficit fever" (*ITT*, Sept. 6) rightly says that the federal deficit has been misrepresented and used to obstruct welfare spending and to attack "entitlements." But he errs when he concludes that the "debt and deficit ... are the stuff of myth." The national debt, now about \$4.5 trillion, is the accumulation of past deficits, mainly those under Reagan and Bush. Interest payments on it transfers upward of \$250 billion annually from millions of taxpayers at large to a few wealthy bondholders. That's no myth. Regressive income transfers of

these dimensions are a very real drag on the economy. Consumers lose, rentiers gain. Jobs are lost, luxury consumption gains. Of course, capitalism "works" by transferring wealth from the many to the few, but let's acknowledge the fact.

Any deficit is spending in excess of revenue, but it makes a great difference what the extra spending was for. If it had been used to build schools, improve health care, control pollution, subsidize housing or promote civilian research, it could be seen as social investment. But it wasn't. Most of the deficits of the Carter, Reagan, Bush and now Clinton administrations resulted from a vast militarization of our society, an unneeded buildup of weapons systems and "defense" programs that will burden our all-but-stagnant economy for many years. That, and the Reagan administration's irresponsible tax reduction plan (mainly for the wealthy) under the slippery title of "tax reform." To cut taxes while increasing spending was pure folly—unless you accept the cynical view of David Stockman, who cooked the numbers in order to create a deficit and make social spending more difficult.

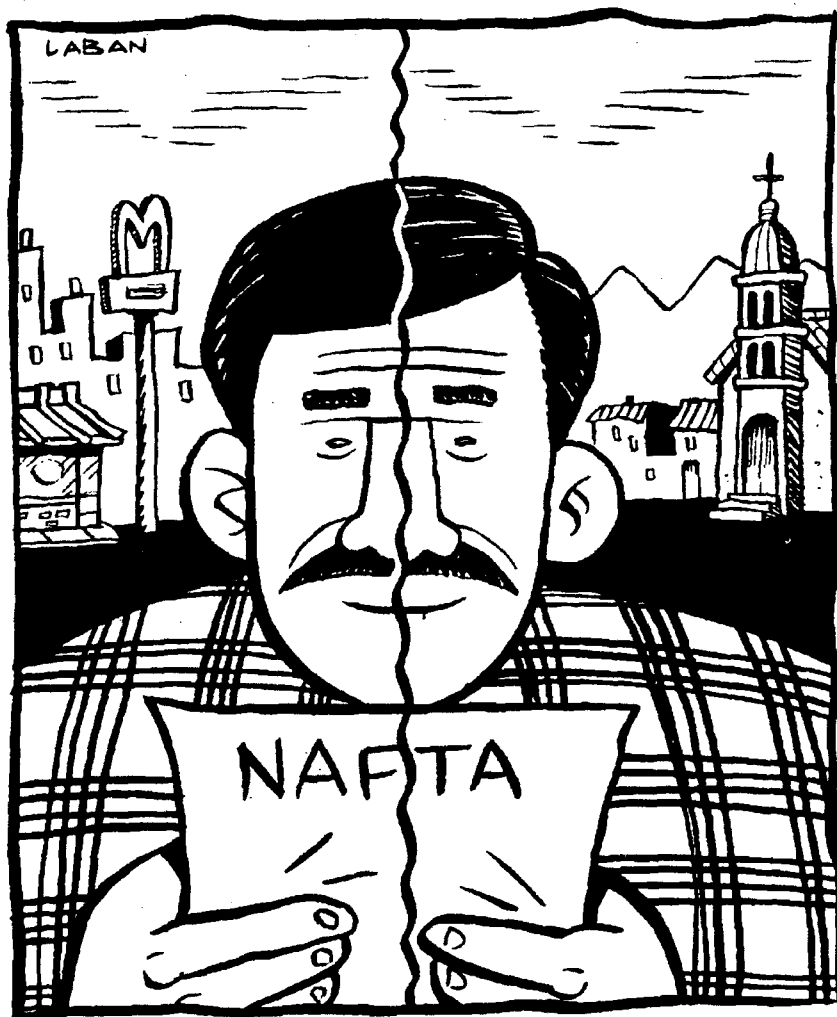
What's needed—radical slashing of military spending—is currently politically impossible. Economic stimulus spending offends the financial powers. But it's foolish to ignore the deficit's long-term effects. It's not a myth.

John Thorkelson
Mansfield Center, Conn.

Correction

The September 20 "In Person" may have left the impression that Bill Pelke's family has not participated in his crusade against capital punishment. Despite an initial reluctance, Pelke's wife and a cousin as well have been staunch supporters of Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation.

InSHORT



SPLIT ALLEGIANCES

U.S. Latinos torn about whether to support NAFTA

With their historic ties to Mexico and other Latin American countries, Latinos in the United States have a special interest in the fate of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). But so far,



By Woody Igou

Surprised he could write

Two Buffalo, N.Y., residents were arrested for the robbery of four banks after a routine traffic stop. When asked to provide his registration



papers, Rudolph Warren reached into the glove compartment and handed a

stack of papers to the policeman, including the holdup note used in the robberies, which stated, "I have a gun. Put all the money in the envelope quickly!"

And he left his driver's license with the bank teller.

Numb gums

An 81-year-old Norwegian grandmother was arrested in Oslo after being caught repeatedly smuggling drugs



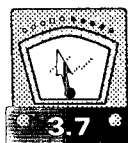
to her jailed grandson. Suspicious prison officials ordered the grandmother to

spit out her false teeth, which contained 20 carefully wrapped sleeping pills.

I can just hear Bob Dole: "Another example of the flagrant abuses found in socialized medicine!"

With talent on loan from others

Hard-body cover-boy heart-throb Fabio has blossomed into our era's version of superstardom—the multimedia presence. He is set to publish his first romance novel



Pirate (Fabio, who didn't write the book, provided the "plot"). His new "album,"

entitled *Fabio After Dark*, is a collection of love songs sung by other people, to which he adds his spoken "secrets of love" between songs.

Hitchhiking bare-chested down the old information superhighway.

Land of the rising tar

A recent *New York Times* article exposed the insidious connection between the Japanese government and tobacco sales. The government-owned monopoly, Japan Tobacco, Inc., generates \$15 billion a year in tax revenue.



Not surprisingly, the government has virtually no anti-tobacco research or

advertising. The government also adds occasional claims of the "benefits" of cigarettes in its annual reports.

A hellishly addictive combination—bureaucrats dispensing tobacco.

APPALL-O-METER SCALE

1. Weightless banality
2. Green Acres stupid
3. Malignant cretinism
4. Howard Sternesque
5. Mary Matalin mean
6. Gangrenous venality
7. A touch of evil
8. A cancer in the Zeitgeist
9. Ee tu, Pol Pot?
10. Horseperson of the Apocalypse

they have not played a critical role in the debate on the U.S.-Mexican-Canadian pact—in part because they are often ambivalent and politically divided.

Most Latinos, as well as their political leaders and organizations, appear to be in favor of the United States increasing trade ties throughout the Americas. Mexican-Americans often support NAFTA out of a sense of national pride or fear of political retaliation by the Mexican government, argues Jose LaLuz, international solidarity director for the Clothing and Textile Workers. But some Puerto Ricans (and other politicians with ties to the Caribbean) fear that Mexico will gain at the expense of the Caribbean. Conservative Cubans resent Mexico's ties to Castro's Cuba and tend to oppose NAFTA.

Business-dominated Latino groups on the whole favor NAFTA, but the few Latinos prominent in the labor movement have been staunch opponents of NAFTA as it is currently formulated. They recognize—as studies by UCLA professor Raul Hinojosa and the Chicago-based Latino Institute have concluded—that Latino workers in the United States are likely to be disproportionately hurt by capital shifts to Mexico. Latinos tend to be concentrated in the low-wage, low-skill manufacturing jobs that are most imperiled by NAFTA.

Union leader LaLuz argues that NAFTA should be rejected in favor a new plan for North American economic integration. He thinks that the fundamental question should be, "What integration would raise the standard of living of the Rivera family in Matamoros and the Rivera family in Chicago? The critical points are the mechanisms to link trade and human rights, environment and labor rights."

More than 100 Latino groups have been working over the past year to create a coalition called the Latino Consensus on NAFTA. The coalition raised nine concerns about President Bush's original NAFTA for Clinton to address. The groups are now satisfied on two points—the environmental and labor "side agreements" negotiated by the Clinton administration. (See *In These Times*, Sept. 6, 1993.) These agreements, however, have been heavily criticized by unions and the more progressive environmental groups, including the Southwest Network on the Environment and Economic Justice, a heavily Latino group.

One of the coalition's other points of concern—a binational agreement on immigration—is not on the NAFTA negotiating table. But Consensus coordinator Antonio Gonzales believes that Clinton will satisfy four other concerns: border infrastructure, small business needs, retraining and assistance for displaced workers, and formation of a North American Development Bank.

Pending development of a full-scale job-retraining program next year, the Labor Department has proposed an 18-month "bridge" program for workers displaced by NAFTA. It is budgeted for \$90 million (half training, half income assistance) on the assumption of "minuscule" job loss, according to a department spokesman.

As *In These Times* went to press, the administration was expected to propose a development bank. Proponents say that, with a relatively small commitment of capital from the United States and Mexico, the bank would be able to raise \$10 billion in funds for infrastructure and economic development projects, mostly on the U.S.-Mexican border. The bank, which Hinojosa has championed, was proposed by Rep. Esteban Torres (D-CA), who has been a severe critic of NAFTA.

Although some observers claim that the bank will not have enough funds,

especially to tackle problems away from the border, it may swing some Latino votes to NAFTA.

Now the Latino congressional caucus is split in roughly three equal parts between opponents, supporters and the undecided, but some of the "no" votes are conditional on actions by the administration, according to Gonzales. The bank and worker retraining are "make or break" issues for his own group, the Southwest Voter Research Institute.

"NAFTA is a good idea, but it's the details that count," Gonzales said, in summarizing the Consensus view. "We want to see us married to Latin America with a mutually beneficial agreement. No, we do not want to lose our jobs because of it. We started with a bad NAFTA with George Bush. We're optimistic that the administration is moving to a good NAFTA. If they make it, we'll be on it. [In early October] we were making plans to go full opposition, but they've come back to the table. We're in good-faith discussions that are going quite well."

—David Moberg

ROUGH ROAD AHEAD

Greek socialists win, but ruling won't be easy

The recent election victory for Greece's socialist Pasok Party marks a stunning comeback for the 74-year-old Andreas Papandreou, who lost power four years ago amid allegations of having used his office for personal gain. Papandreou has aged

visibly in the interim, with his gait, gestures and speech all slow and plodding. But his ability to set off the crowds at the huge rallies typical of Greece's hyper-participatory brand of politics remains undiminished.

The socialists snatched 47 percent of the popular vote in the October election, while the ruling New Democracy party got only 39 percent. Thanks to a new electoral law that awards bonus seats to the leading party, Pasok will receive 171 seats in the 300-seat Green parliament, compared to only 110 for the center-right New Democracy party. Ten seats will go to the nationalist Political Spring party, formed by former Foreign Minister Antonis Samaras. Samaras brought down Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis' New Democracy government when rebel members of parliament defected to the new party, thus forcing Mitsotakis to call early elections.

Papandreou successfully hammered away at New Democracy's widely unpopular austerity policies. The socialists claim they can bring back a "society with a human face," while at the same time lowering Greece's mammoth public debt. That claim, however, brought ridicule from New Democracy's followers, who noted that it was the socialists who ran up the huge debt during their '80s reign, by consistently giving raises to public-sector employees and pensioners.

Indeed, the size of the public-sector debt—116 percent of total gross domestic product—will tightly bind the new socialist government's economic policies. In fact, many business experts concluded during the elections that there would be little difference in terms of economic policy between a Pasok or New Democracy government because the European Community (EC) is strictly monitoring Greece's progress in lowering its debt level. Given that the EC transfers several billion dollars to Greece annually—about the same

MEDIA BEAT

By Pat Aufderheide

Who's buying whom?

Proposed mega-media mergers reveal the fluid, speculative nature of media business today. Viacom, with strength in programming (MTV, Nickelodeon), wants to merge with Paramount and become a super-programmer. Viacom's rival, home-shopping channel QVC, has a different approach. Backed by the cable industry's largest player, Tele-Communications, Inc. (TCI), QVC is gambling on controlling key parts of interactive business, of which cable's just part of the picture. The Bell Atlantic-TCI merger is an even more ingenious solution to the insecurities of the fast-moving new info-industry. This deal would protect the phone company, which wants to enter cable's business, from its most serious competitor—and vice versa. The only losers would be consumers and the public.

Rather intense

In another attempt to secure the role as today's Edward R. Murrow, Dan Rather has again spoken truth to broadcasters. At a conference of radio and TV news directors, Rather said that "we have allowed this great instrument, this resource, this weapon for good, to be squandered and cheapened." He decried what he called the new mantras: "Kiss ass, move with the mass, and for heaven's and the ratings' sake, don't make any body mad—certainly not

anybody in a position of power." Finally, he urged hiring for diversity and, that Rather favorite, "courage."

Conglomerate censorship

Does corporate conglomeration in media inhibit diversity of expression? Look at book publishing on the info industry. When media conglomerates own the publishing house, reports *Variety*, some projects just don't happen. Robert Sam Anson's book on Walt Disney—which in passing portrayed Paramount CEO Martin Davis in a negative light—fell through at Simon & Schuster (a Paramount holding), which also dropped a book on Paramount producer Bob Evans. At Disney-owned Hyperion, a book on a Disney-owned TV series was squelched, apparently to please the show's star. And at MCA-owned G.P. Putnam, a biography of Calvin Klein was axed with the help of MCA honcho David Geffen, a friend of the fashion designer. So far, authors have usually found other publishing houses.

By the way...

Get ready for *The Ross Perot Show*, a national radio commentary program. Really. ... Ex-Republican political consultant Roger Ailes, who produces *The Rush Limbaugh Show*, now runs the business news channel CNBC, with other conservative types also moving in. ... Meanwhile, if you're looking for sassy, critical talkback to mainstream media, try Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting's weekly *CounterSpin* (212-633-6700), now aired on 48 public radio stations.

©1993 Pat Aufderheide

amount taken in by the entire Greek tourist sector—EC directives regarding the debt must be heeded if Greece is to keep this vital cash flow coming. Thus, while populist rhetoric about the economy ruled the day in the socialists' election campaign, it is likely that pragmatism will be the mainstay of the new Papandreou economic policy.

Hopefully the same will be true with the socialists' foreign policy. During the campaign the socialists latched onto the nationalist fervor surrounding the naming of Greece's new independent neighbor, the former Yugoslavian republic of Macedonia. The socialists criticized Prime Minister Mitsotakis' conciliatory stand on the "name issue" and said that under no circumstances should Greece allow their neighbor to use the name "Macedonia." A Greek province bears the same name—and many Greeks worry that the new country has territorial designs on the province. Papandreou went so far as to propose sealing Greece's borders with the new state if it did not comply, thereby cutting the northern neighbor off from desperately needed oil and foodstuffs.

Mitsotakis' position was that he would settle for a final name for this new state that included the word Macedonia, as long as it was clear that the new state had no plans to take Greek territory. Under this plan, a name such as "North Macedonia" or "Slavo-Macedonia" would have been acceptable.

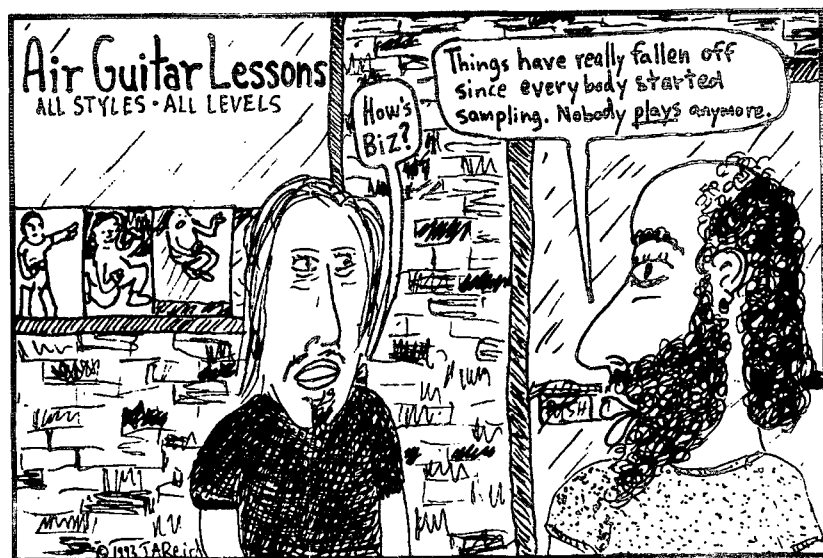
One would hope that the new Papandreou government will eventually take a similar line, and that the more inflammatory policy proposed by Pasok during the campaign will be tempered by a realization that Greece would have very little to gain and much to lose from a war over the name of its neighbor.

But firm predictions on this score are difficult to make. Though Papandreou is trying to portray Pasok as a reasoned social democratic party, like those in West Germany and Scandinavia, the latest election campaign makes clear that the party is still firmly planted in the populist soil from which it rose two decades ago. Meaning that Greece's final say on Balkan policy may lie not with Andreas Papandreou but with the electorate that has vaulted him into power once again.

—James P. Kales

ROUGH CUTS

By JA Reid



ETC.

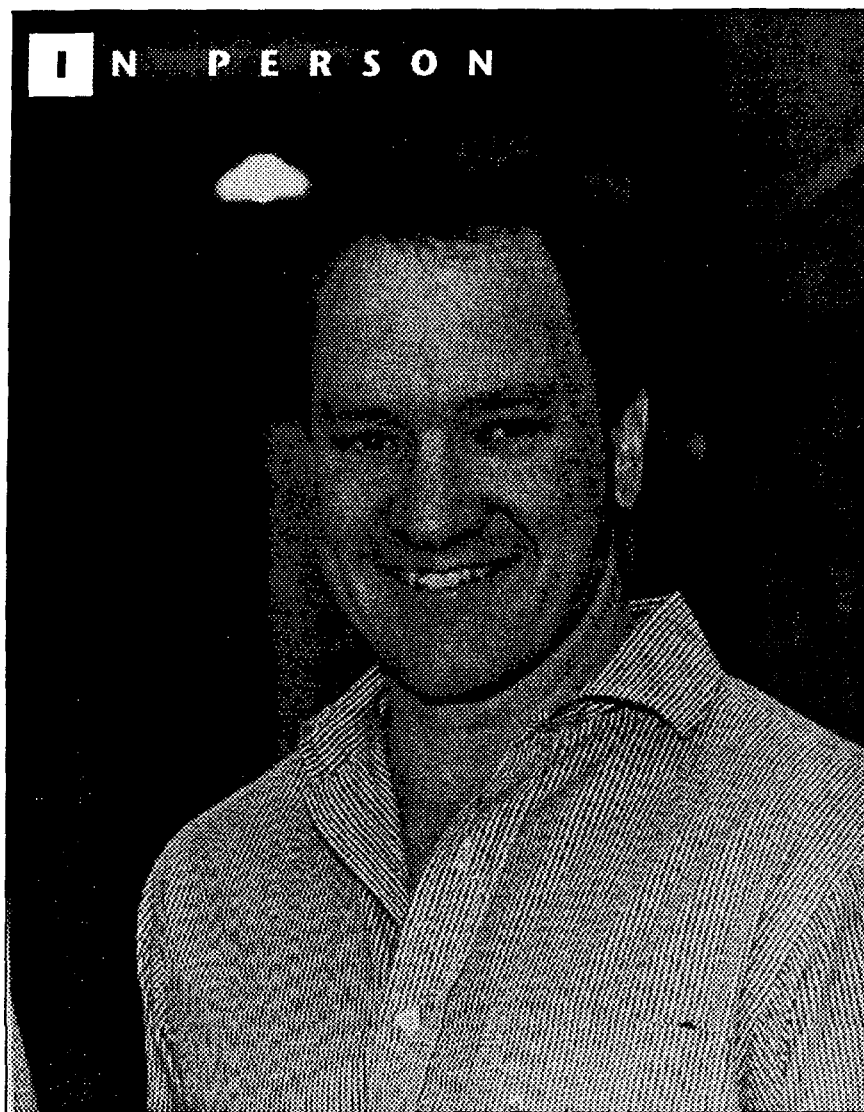
By Miles Harvey

A test of resolve

When China tested a nuclear weapon in October, many arms-control advocates worried that the action would imperil the current U.S. moratorium on nuclear testing. Moreover, they were concerned that the Chinese test would endanger upcoming negotiations for a Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB) treaty to end to all nuclear testing worldwide.

Observers close to the situation report that there was some pressure on Clinton—mostly from the Department of Defense and National Security Council—to resume U.S. testing in the wake of the Chinese action. “This was something the pro-testing forces could latch onto—to say, ‘Well, if the Chinese could do it, we could do it,’” says Mark Sternman, disarmament campaign organizer for Peace Action (formerly SANE/Freeze).

Resumption of U.S. testing would have been a particularly dangerous move, say arms-control advocates, because a U.S. test probably would have opened the door for France and England to resume testing as well. And Boris Yeltsin—whose shaky presidency is more dependent than ever on the Russian military—is apparently under pressure to end his country’s moratorium. The pro-testing forces held some sway with the administration in the angry aftermath of the Chinese test, according to sources. But cooler heads quickly prevailed. That’s partly due to the fact that a law passed last year prevented Clinton from an immediate,

**OPENING DOORS**

Robert Mitchell assesses campus multiculturalism

Walk into Room 202, which sits at the end of a hallway on the second floor of Manhattan’s Chelsea High School, and you’ll find yourself in front of a wall of photos depicting manicured lawns, ivied dormitories and marble-pillared libraries. These scenes are unfamiliar to most Chelsea students, who commute to school from the notoriously poor neighborhoods of Harlem, the Bronx and New York’s Lower East Side. But this is the classroom of English teacher Robert Mitchell, and no one walks into the room without thinking, at least for a moment, about college.

Mitchell, who is 33 and white, is the resident savant on college choices for non-white students in the United States today. He’s interviewed upward of a thousand minority college students on the ins and outs of college living. He’s corresponded with the admissions offices at more than 240 colleges and universities, public and private, large and small, in putting together his just-published *Multicultural Student’s Guide to Colleges*, subtitled *What Every African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic and Native American Applicant Needs to Know about America’s Top Schools* (The Noonday Press).

kind response to the Chinese move. Under the terms of that law, the United States could not have resumed testing until next August. In addition, "there's very little support on the Hill—and by extension, with the American people—to resume testing," Sternman explains. And there was strong opposition to testing within the administration itself. "Under the Reagan and Bush administrations, the Department of Energy usually weighed in on the side of the weapons labs. But new Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary has come out strongly opposing the resumption of testing," says Sternman. Ironically, argues Sternman, the Chinese test may wind up aiding the CTB cause. "The Chinese test—while itself deplorable—is not a major setback to CTB," he says. "Because of the negative public reaction in the United States, it might even turn out to be a benefit." The CTB talks begin at the U.N. Conference on Disarmament in Geneva early next year. Arms-control groups hope to harness grass-roots support to push for quick passage of a CTB. They're working against the clock, because U.S. approval of a test-ban treaty would require the support of two-thirds of the Senate—and CTB advocates fear that the 1994 election will bring in more Republicans. Anti-nuclear organizations also want to pass a CTB before the Nuclear Non-Proliferation (NPT) Treaty—which helps check the spread of nuclear weapons—comes up for renewal in 1995. Peace groups fear that a deadlock on the CTB could endanger the NPT as well.

The book is the result of four years of research Mitchell conducted over summers, vacations, and on the fringes of days teaching, coaching track and advising the Chelsea student yearbook and newspaper staff—a project borne of the frustration Mitchell felt advising and encouraging his non-white students to choose a college.

"Students of color from the inner city, if they get college counseling at all, tend to be shuttled off to city colleges, regardless of their potential," says Mitchell. His aim in compiling the guide was to explore a range of options open to students, from small liberal arts colleges like Colby College in Maine, where only 7.9 percent of the population is non-white, to historically black universities, such as Howard University in Washington, D.C., where the figure stands at 82.5 percent.

"I want my students to start imagining themselves at college," says Mitchell. During a "College Week" he holds each year, Mitchell passes out catalog photos of non-white students in college settings and asks his students to picture themselves in that situation and write about it. "For them, college is something that other people do," he says. "What they end up writing about is loneliness."

Once a non-white student is enrolled, does college become a more welcoming prospect? Reports from the field are mixed. While many colleges are hiring "multicultural advisers," recruiting a more diverse applicant pool and working to "de-Westernize" their curricula, on-campus racial incidents are all too common—and retention rates for minority students remain low.

During the 1991-92 school year at the University of Pennsylvania, students dumped water from a high-rise dormitory onto fellow students who were demonstrating against the Rodney King verdict. Similarly, women pledging a Latina sorority were pelted with items from the same windows. Further, Mitchell's research found that Penn's minority students complain of racial slurs, harassment by campus police and offensive editorial cartoons in the campus newspaper.

"Unfortunately, racism is probably a part of life at most schools," says Mitchell. "But what I'm interested in is what gets done about it. What kind of support does the administration give? How supportive is the student body?"

The good news is that an increasing number of students, white and non-white, are calling for a more diverse campus life. "Ninety percent of changes in curriculum and lifestyle come from student pressure on the administration," says Mitchell.

Mitchell, now in his ninth year at Chelsea, hopes that his guide will help answer the needs of the growing diaspora of non-white students. The book, weighing in at 839 pages, introduces the prospective student to a set of criteria that other guides scarcely mention. Mitchell ticks off some of the previously unasked questions: "How many Hispanic professors are tenured? What is the ratio of African-American men to women on campus? How big is the Asian Studies department? Does the administration respond effectively to incidents of racism?"

As institutions of higher education prepare for a future in which non-white students will outnumber whites, Robert Mitchell offers a report card. "It's only been in the last dozen years that colleges have woken up to the fact that we have to diversify our campuses," he says. "Some do it because they think it's the right thing to do. But the demographics demand it. There aren't as many white, upper-middle-class males as there used to be."

—Sara Corbett

THE FIRST STONE

Funding conundrum

By Joel Bleifuss

Progressives in the U.S. tend to blame their chronic political weakness on social and economic forces that are beyond mortal control. The advantage of this view is that it relieves the left of any blame for its own political failures. But if we stop assuming that uncontrollable historical factors alone are determining our future, then we have to face the fact that, for all our higher education, we on the left have at times acted stupidly.

In my column in the last issue, I argued that progressives were undermining their political future by not paying people who do political work a living wage. To get the most social change for the buck, human and material resources need to be wisely invested.

Sandy O'Donnell, a professor of public administration at Chicago's Roosevelt University, is a specialist in non-profit administration. One of the constant issues she deals with is the relationship between social change and low wages. "The philanthropic sector and the non-profit sector have to think through a lot more issues of quality so we can get out of the trap of trying to get quantity for our dollars," says O'Donnell. Among the "quality issues" that she believes need to be thought through are wages and benefits.

"There is an ethos in the foundation community about getting the most bang for your buck," says O'Donnell. "That essentially translates into trying to get as much as you can for your scarce philanthropic gift. It is good business sense to get the most for your dollar, but what that translates into for the grant-seekers is that they tend to depress wages in order to keep the amount of money they are requesting acceptably low. But it is a Catch-22. Grant-seekers have difficulty both recruiting good quality workers at those low rates and retaining their talents. As a result, the grantee performs poorly and the foundation then gets angry that it is not getting the results that were promised. So next

time the foundation gives even less."

Lois Gibbs, executive director of Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste in Falls Church, Va., provides her 13 workers with benefits that include medical insurance, dental insurance, six personal days per year, four weeks vacation and a pension plan that pays 7 percent of salary per year. Though proud of these benefits, she worries that they might look extravagant to the foundations she depends on for survival. "We wonder if the funding groups think it is too steep," she says.

Ken Rollings, a former community organizer, is an associate director at Woods Charitable Trust in Chicago, where he funds community organizing efforts in the city. Rollings believes that the governing boards of non-profit corporations must become sensitive to workers' needs. "We look for an organization that has stability. And it is a plus if folks have figured out how to give people decent

salaries and benefits, which are something we appreciate in our own jobs," he says. "A lot of good organizing is harmed by the constant turnover of staff and that is due in part to the financial and benefit issues people have to face."

John Stauber, a self-employed consultant who works on a variety of causes from his home in Madison, Wis., recalls getting a grant 10 years' ago from a foundation to organize against Project ELF, a military communications network in Wisconsin and Michigan. The foundation told him he had not budgeted enough to adequately pay himself. "They said, 'We worry about activists who are paid starvation wages.' Later, in 1984, after working seven days a week, 10 hours a day, I went through a major burnout," says Stauber. "Part of my problem was that I severely undervalued my worth—both monetarily and psychologically." He decided his labor was worth that of a mainstream journalist, so he now charges at a full-time rate equivalent to \$40,000 a year, plus \$8,000 for benefits.

"It is not the case that there is no money to pay people good wages," says Stauber. "The problem is that organizations have developed along the lines of underpaying their staff. When we talk about exploitation, typically we mean someone getting rich at someone else's expense. In activist organizations, it is a case of organizational exploitation where the organizations are underpaying staff to get more work done."

In addition to the endemic failure of social-change organizations to pay a living wage, there has been a corresponding failure to build a national infrastructure that could effectively challenge the nation's rightward political drift.

Fourteen years ago, Ronald Reagan was a national joke. "Once you've seen one tree you've seen them all," he said, speaking of the redwoods. But nobody sniggered when the Reagan revolution shifted the national political debate so far

to the right that corporate standard-bearers such as George Bush and Lloyd Bentsen staked out the center.

Caught off guard by the rise of Reagan, the left saw its fortunes recede. "Liberal" became a word associated with phrases like "out of touch," "soft on crime" and "big government." One could argue that Reagan's politics of reaction triumphed, in part, because the right invested its resources more wisely than the left. Of course, defenders of the status quo have always outspent reformers, but that alone does not explain the disparity in political power.

During the '80s, conservatives put their money where their mouths were. They built a network of right-wing foundations, think tanks, publications, interest groups and political marketeers. This communications apparatus gained prominence along with the officials whose election that infrastructure supported.

To put it simply, while the left—as the bumper sticker advised—was acting locally and thinking globally, the "global" players in Washington consolidated their grip on power, effectively undermining any strides made locally.

Take the example of funding the alternative press, a subject close to our hearts at *In These Times*. Beth Schulman, *In These Times* associate publisher, surveyed foundation grant-making from 1985 through 1990. She found that during this period right-wing foundations spent at least \$3.2 million funding publications like *The American Spectator*, *The National Interest*, *The Public Interest*, *National Review*, *New Criterion* and *Critical Review Journal*. In addition, those same foundations granted \$1.1 million to the Institute for Educational Affairs, a neoconservative group that funds a variety of right-wing campus newspapers. Conversely, in the same period, progressive foundations contributed \$165,000—4 percent of the total spent by the right—to help *The Progressive*, *Nuclear Times* (now defunct), *E* magazine, *The Nation* and *Mother Jones*.

"The left's priorities are primarily attempts to solve the manifestation of a problem rather than to get at changing policy," says Schulman, who has previously raised money to support community organizing. "Or there is a lot of stress on empowerment. But because there is no challenge to large formal power relationships, that empowerment can only be effective on a very small scale."

In effect, the right spends its money on efforts to shape national political debate, while the left tends to follow a set of priorities that focus on local solutions to immediate human needs. In this

the left is continuing in the tradition of turn-of-the-century reformers whose life mission was to minister to those cut out of the nation's economic loop. All too often this translated into the idea of the deserving poor to whom we should provide the best of all possible social welfare programs.

Such an attitude is both patronizing and ineffective. The left cannot win widespread support by appealing to altruism and guilt with the tired liberal refrain that we need to help the poor because it is the good and charitable thing to do.

Too often the left's notion of local "empowerment" blends into the right's notion of charity. One effective national jobs program would shine brighter than any thousand points of light. But to get to that point the left first has to change the way it thinks and to abandon the language of moral persuasion. Poverty needs to be addressed not because it is the "moral" thing to do but because the poor, and their related social ills, impose an unbearable cost on everyone in society, all of whom suffer from unsafe streets, expensive prisons and an illiterate workforce. Second, in order for the left to introduce its own ideas into the national debate, it must invest, as the right did in the '80s, in its own information and communications infrastructure.

Similarly, the only way to convince the best and the brightest to spend a lifetime working for political change is to grant them a living wage. That doesn't cost; it pays. ◀

THE ADVENTURES OF A HUGE MOUTH

by Peter Hannan



ECONOMICS

No help wanted

Clinton officials are slowly beginning to acknowledge that the country is in the throes of a job crisis. In technical terms, the recession ended in March 1991. Since then, the economy has grown about 2.5 percent annually. But job growth—particularly in manufacturing—has not kept pace. Total employment actually declined by 253,000 jobs from August to September.

The country faces an unemployment crisis. And Clinton's big initiatives will only make matters worse.

"We are living in a very different era now," Labor Secretary Robert Reich noted recently. "It's not cyclical unemployment. People are going to have to deal with structural unemployment, changes in entire industries."

By John B. Judis
WASHINGTON D.C.

But the administration—stymied by Congress—has not done anything to address this job crisis. On the contrary, all its major initiatives—from the fiscal year 1994 budget to its proposal for health care reform—would actually depress job growth. Admin-

istration officials can see a precipice looming ahead, but they can't seem to do anything to prevent the country from walking over it.

The current job crisis is rooted in trends that go back at least to the '20s. Since then, dramatic innovations in technology and industrial organization have made it possible to expand the production of goods while drastically reducing the time it takes to produce them—leading to a new kind of unemployment that John Maynard Keynes and other economists have referred to as "technological" or "structural" unemployment. In a seminal 1969 essay, historian Martin J. Sklar called this trend the "disaccumulation of capital."

This trend has appeared most dramatically in the decades of the '20s, the '50s and the '80s—each time reflecting new technological advances. From 1981 to 1992, for example, the output of goods—and particularly of durable goods—almost doubled. But as a result of the widespread introduction of computer automation, the number of workers

engaged in goods production declined. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, goods-production jobs shrank from 25.5 million to 23.1 million in these years. The decline was particularly marked in the production of autos, steel and other durable goods, where employment went from 12.1 million to 10.2 million.

Job decline occurred in almost every branch of manufacturing—even those that experienced the most rapid growth in output. In computer and office equipment, for instance, employment shrank from 181,100 to 126,100; in semiconductors, it went from 91,900 to 89,700.

These changes were not simply the result of a recession. Even during the current recovery, employment has continued to decline. From September 1992 to September 1993, the country lost 125,000 jobs in goods-producing industries. In durable-goods production, employment dropped by nearly 200,000.

Since 1981, total employment has increased by about 17 million jobs, but the increase has occurred entirely outside of goods production—in low-wage services and in government. Entirely new kinds of employment have sprung up. For instance, 285,500 Americans sold computers and computer software in 1992, and 282,100 worked in sports and recreation clubs.

The most rapid growth in existing services occurred in retail food and health care. The number of workers employed at restaurants and bars rose from 4.7 million in 1981 to 6.6 million in 1992. Workers in health services—including insurance—climbed from 5.6 million to 8.5 million. Overall, health care accounted for about one in six new workers.

But services, too, were affected by computer automation. Workers in telephone communications declined by some

19,000 between 1981 and 1992. From 1986 to 1992, the number of workers in finance, insurance and real estate barely increased.

The same trends have prevailed during the Clinton presidency. From September 1992 through September 1993, the most dramatic job growth was in restaurants and bars. Growth has also occurred in hotels and other lodging places, as well as in health services and in local and state government. But jobs continue to be lost in communications and public utilities, as well as in insurance and real estate. As computer automation spreads to more services, job growth throughout the economy is beginning to slow.

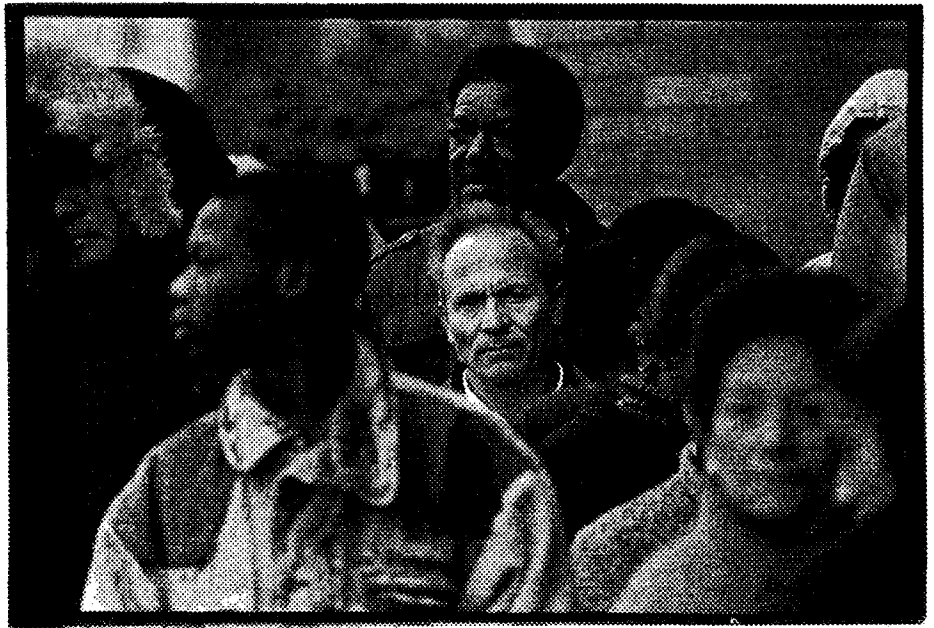
Few of the newly created jobs are full time. According to a study by Lawrence Mishel and Jared Bernstein of the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), 60 percent of the jobs created between January and July 1993 were part time. Many of the new jobs are also low wage. Overall real wages declined .6 percent from 1991 to 1993, according to Mishel and Bernstein.

The failure of wages to rise has held down demand for American goods and contributed to the weakness of the recovery. The American economy now appears to be caught in a vicious circle. As it expands output to meet existing demand, it reduces higher-paying manufacturing jobs, which dampens demand. This cycle, if allowed to continue unbroken, could keep the American economy mired in a slump for the next decade. Nonetheless, the Clinton administration and Congress have been slow to act.

Most of the administration's economic plans were hatched last December, when officials believed that the economy was perched on the edge of a buoyant recovery. The administration did propose a \$16 billion jobs stimulus bill—only about half of which would have directly affected jobs—but Congress, believing that deficit reduction was more important than job creation, blocked it.

Clinton eliminated many of the job-creating public investment provisions from his 1994 budget proposal, and many of those that remained were eliminated by Congress. In the bill that Congress passed last August, it allotted 3 percent less for public investment than did the 1993 Bush administration budget.

Congress' budget also reduced military spending—by \$123 billion over the next four years beyond what the Bush administration had proposed. Next year, the defense budget will be about \$265 billion—down from a high of \$320 billion in 1991 and from \$290 billion in 1993. These cuts were entirely justified on foreign-policy and long-term economic grounds, but will nevertheless have an immediate and drastic effect on jobs.



According to Greg Bischak of the National Commission for Economic Conversion and Disarmament, the defense cuts will eliminate from 1.8 to 2 million jobs. No legislation that Congress has passed will make up for these cuts. Clinton has proposed, and Congress has tentatively agreed to, funds for retraining and conversion, but they will amount to only about \$18 billion over four years—which will hardly offset the effect of the cuts in defense.

Cuts made since 1989 are already devastating those parts of the country that were heavily dependent on military spending. In California, employment in defense-related industries is expected to fall 17 percent this year. Aerospace employment has fallen from 374,000 in 1988 to 220,000 today. State officials expect to lose another 125,000 jobs over the next four years. And if current trends in the broader economy continue, these workers will not be likely to find new manufacturing jobs.

None of Clinton's other initiatives will create jobs. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the North American Free Trade Agreement will have a "negligible" effect on employment. And other experts predict the pact will cost thousands of American jobs.

Moreover, Vice President Gore's plan to streamline the federal bureaucracy proposes to cut 252,000 federal jobs. While government efficiency is a worthy goal, these cuts would wreak havoc in Washington, D.C., and neighboring Maryland and Virginia.

And Clinton's health care initiative, if successful in cutting costs, will result in job losses in the fastest growing sector of the economy. At the very least, many of the 500,000 small, independent insurance agents and their employees will find themselves out of work. The pharmaceutical industry is expected to lose a fifth of its 350,000 jobs. And there

should be significant cutbacks in medical administration. Like the reductions in military employment, these cuts in jobs will eliminate waste and inefficiency. But they will also worsen the country's employment crisis.

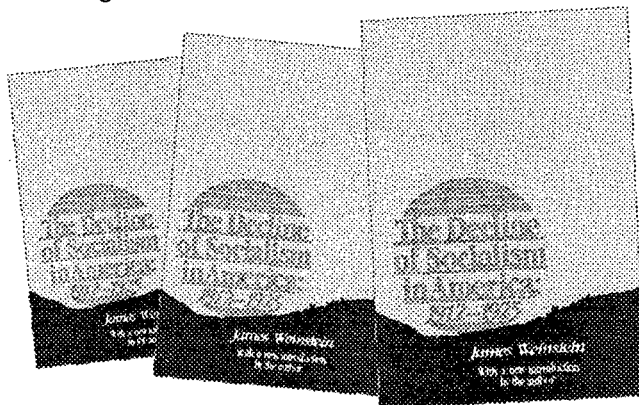
This job crisis poses a mortal threat to the American economy and society. It can continue to choke off a recovery—even if Japan and Western Europe begin to awaken from their doldrums. And it can deepen divisions within society—between white and black, citizen and immigrant, employed and unemployed, city and suburb. Such schisms are already developing in California—with the state's Republican governor sponsoring, and its Democratic senators seconding, Draconian measures against illegal immigrants.

Stemming the crisis will eventually require initiatives that are as bold as those Franklin Roosevelt introduced in the '30s. As the private sector becomes increasingly unable to generate new employment and economic demand on its own, government's role will actually have to expand rather than shrink—and this expansion will have to be on a scale well beyond what's now contemplated by even the staunchest liberal.

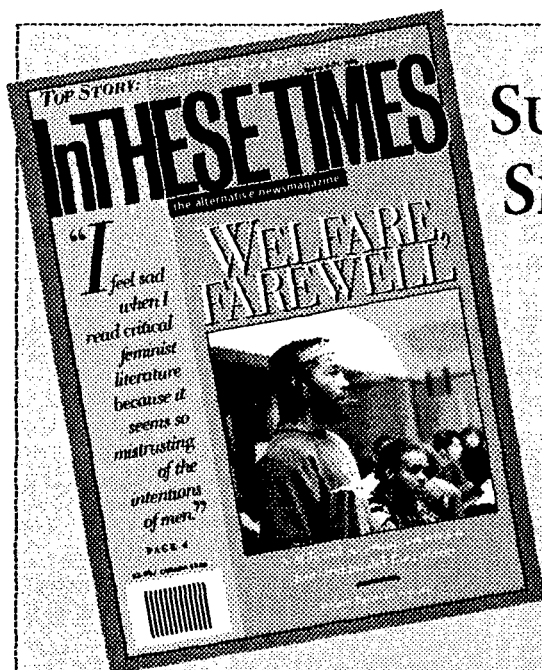
Most Americans—already skeptical of government's role in the economy—are not ready for such monumental changes, and the Clinton administration certainly isn't prepared to propose them. Just as in the '30s, the economic crisis will have to deepen before what now seems unthinkable becomes eminently reasonable.

Now even our own enlightened thinking is in short supply.

After 25 years, editor James Weinstein's classic, *The Decline of Socialism in America: 1912-1925*, is now officially out of print. But if you hurry, you can get one of the few remaining copies by ordering direct from In These Times.



Send \$12.95 to:
In These Times, "Decline of Socialism"
2040 N Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647



SUBSCRIBER SERVICES

☐ NEW SUBSCRIPTION.
(You'll receive your first issue in 4-6 weeks. Please check price and terms below.)

AST1

☐ RENEW ME NOW.
(We'll extend your current subscription for as long as you like. This saves you any worries about expiring and saves us the money in sending renewal notices and bills.)

ART1

I AM:

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

☐ MOVING: (allow 4-6 weeks for change.)

NEW ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

☐ WHAT A GREAT GIFT IDEA!

(Just try and find a gift with more thought behind it. Fill out your name above and the lucky person's name here.) XSTH1

NAME OF RECIPIENT

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

PRICES & TERMS

☐ One year, 26 issues: \$34.95 ☐ Six months, 13 issues: \$18.95 ☐ Institutional, one year: \$59.00

☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me ☐ Charge my ☐ Visa ☐ MC

ACCOUNT NUMBER / EXPIRATION DATE

For orders to Canada, add: \$27.50 (one year), \$13.50 (six months) for postage. All other foreign orders add: \$41.00 (one year), \$20.50 (six months).
Mail to: IN THESE TIMES Customer Service, 1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054. 1-800-827-0270.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Good COPS

W

*An innovative
community
group in
Texas is
taking on
its toughest
challenge yet:
jobs.*

By John Gardner
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

hen Virginia Ramirez first appeared before the San Antonio City Council, she lost her voice. Thirty people accompanied her to the microphone to support her position about housing funds. She had carefully written, rehearsed and edited her speech to sound good in English, her second language.

But when she stood up to speak, some nameless fear made her forget everything. She turned hopelessly to the people standing behind her, wondering whether to apologize, or to ask a more experienced leader to take her place. But 30 trusting, confident faces helped her regain composure. She faced the council again and made her point.

"I always remember that moment," Ramirez relates. "Without the people who will stand with me, I am nothing. They give me strength in the public arena.

With them I have power to act and make a difference." Ramirez, a mother of five children now grown, is a 1993-94 co-chair of Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS), a group rooted in predominantly Mexican-American Roman Catholic churches in San Antonio, Texas.

Ramirez is just one of many COPS success stories. No other community organization in the country can claim COPS' record of building a power base for lower-income people, without getting corrupted or co-opted. Formally founded in 1974 with the help of noted organizer Ernesto Cortes, COPS is now the anchor organization for Texas Interfaith, a statewide coalition of church-based community groups. In two decades of work, COPS has made significant gains in improving the infrastructure and the schools in lower-income areas of San Antonio. Now, after two and a half years of planning, the group is addressing one of the area's most pressing needs: jobs.

The key to the COPS approach is its focus on developing local leadership. "If you met me 10 years ago, you would never recognize me," laughs Ramirez. "My place was in my family, and that was it. Now I have a B.A., a job in public health education that I love, and I go to Washington, Austin, all over the place to help anywhere I can."

Her family recruited her to politics. Ramirez first heard about COPS in her church, Immaculate Conception, on San Antonio's poor and Hispanic west side. Her cousin—a mother and parishioner like herself—became a COPS leader, standing up for herself in a way that astonished Ramirez. "She was going to meetings all the time, talking to politicians, deciding what to do. That just wasn't what Mexican-American women did."

Mexican-American women, Ramirez had been taught from birth, took care of their families and refrained from making waves. For years, she attended to her private duties and tried her best to protect her family from America's dangerous inhospitality. Politics, she thought, was for men, especially Anglo men.

When her cousin brought her along to large political meetings, the experience unsettled her. Hundreds of fellow parishioners grilled city officials, demanding short, clear answers to questions, hooting and groaning when politicians gave them the run-around. Ramirez had never seen anything like it, much less taken part herself. "I was shocked. I thought they were too radical," she laughs, "and rude!"

A few months later, her cousin coaxed her to go to a smaller planning meeting. "She promised me there wasn't going to be any shouting," Ramirez recalls. She listened silently as parishioners stewed and complained, in English



**COPS founding organizer
Ernesto Cortes**

and Spanish, about local problems. Impatient, Ramirez ventured her first question, to a local COPS leader: "What are you going to do about all this?" The leader responded: "What are *you* going to do?"

Ramirez regarded the retort as discourteous; she sat smoldering through the rest of the meeting. Shortly afterwards, Sister Catherine Stephens, a COPS staff organizer, visited her at home. "She just listened to me. I told her how angry I was at that meeting. She asked me what made me angry and before I knew it, I was talking about how people on my block didn't have decent places to live—and these were decent people! Hard-working people, with children to raise, just like me." Ramirez cleaned homes in wealthy San Antonio neighborhoods, and suddenly it seemed wrong that her tax dollars paid for their gleaming streets and gutters while rain in her neighborhood created endless mud.

Ramirez agreed to host a house meeting that turned into a lively discussion with neighbors about the public aspects of their very private lives: streets, sewers, parks—the endless array of problems that mired their hopes in unending, infuriating struggles. With Sister Stephens' guidance, and the constant example of many angry, hopeful, vocal Mexican-American women she saw taking charge, Virginia Ramirez slowly became a leader.

By 1983, when she received her public baptism by fire in front of the San Antonio City Council, plunging into the dynamics of negotiation, demand and confrontation, she

was, although she did not yet know it, ready.

By the time Ramirez stepped up to the microphone, COPS was nearly 10 years old. Nowhere else in America did a local organization of low-income residents command COPS' clout, respect or national attention.

COPS is generally credited with the voter turnout that elected Henry Cisneros, the first Mexican-American mayor of a major American city (and now the U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development). COPS also gets credit for the installation of paved streets and sewers in San Antonio's long-neglected west side and the emergence of Mexican-Americans as a serious voting bloc in San Antonio—and elsewhere in Texas. Public officials believe COPS can turn out 50,000 votes. In 1986, COPS opposed the city's new sports palace, the Alamodome (which was supported by the corporate estab-

lishment and Mayor Cisneros), and almost won with 47 percent of the vote.

Ramirez and other COPS leaders credit founding organizer Cortes with the specific methods and tone that have made COPS a local success, a cornerstone for statewide organizing and a national model. Cortes heads the Southwest office of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), a Saul Alinsky-founded organization that provides training and support for affiliated community groups. He has won a MacArthur genius fellowship, and has developed inside relationships with Texas politicians ranging from Gov. Ann Richards to Ross Perot. Cortes has declined more than one attractive job offer to continue doing what he loves most—training leaders like Virginia Ramirez.

The foundation of IAF training, as Ramirez discovered, is day-to-day experience in organizing—recruiting new organizers, developing strategy and coordinating the implementation of organizing victories as concrete as curbs and gutters. Local workshops helped her reflect on, and learn from, her experience, refining the skills necessary for what Cortes calls public discourse: meetings, negotiations, confrontation, compromise.

Ten-day national workshops, attended by IAF affiliates from all over America, provide a synthesizing framework for experience and skills. Ramirez learned that power could integrate and fulfill her faith and values. She also met, and developed relationships with, leaders of many races, regions and religions. National training reinforced and synthesized the vocabulary, methods and relationships of organizing.

She learned a political vocabulary that she could use to encourage others to become political actors rather than audience.

Throughout all levels of training, the new leaders learn to listen. Listening is the basic building block of democratic power and of effective, sustainable political and personal relationships.

As an emerging COPS leader, Ramirez was responsible for recruiting and developing new leaders. One successful recruit was Father Rosendo Urabazo, a Claretian Ph.D. new both to parish leadership and to San Antonio. She listened to him, as Sister Stephens had listened to her, coaxing and encouraging him into action and leadership. The cycle repeated itself.

Reflecting on Ramirez' skill, Father Urabazo remains impressed that a Mexican-American housewife, still cleaning houses while attending college and raising five children, had the time and the interest to listen to him talk about his feelings and reactions to his new ministry. "Do you know," he recalls, "she was the only person who asked me what I wanted in my work, my faith and my life."

Ramirez and Urabazo joined hundreds of other local leaders who helped COPS and IAF develop similar local organizations throughout the state, federated as Texas Interfaith. Not every group developed COPS' clout, but they all contributed to impressive statewide results over the course of a decade hostile to progressive organizing efforts. In 1983, Texas Interfaith helped push \$80 million for low-income health care through the Texas legislature. In 1984, the group worked with Ross Perot to gain \$100 million from the legislature in order to equalize aid to local school districts. In 1988, COPS helped pass a statewide referendum providing \$100 million for basic water services in unincorporated *colonias* (Mexican-American settlements) in the Rio Grande Valley; in 1991, the group helped push through another referendum for \$150 million more.

Part of Texas Interfaith's power derives from its distinctive long-range planning and persistence. "The horizon of most businesses is the next quarter's financial report," reflects Urabazo. "For government, it's usually the next election. For service organizations like churches, it's next year's budget. But if we're going to be true to our values and mission, we have to think in generations. Like Virginia Ramirez. She taught me more than leadership and public participation. She taught me horizons."

When COPS leaders like Ramirez or Urabazo start using IAF's vocabulary, integrating it into their own lives, the words help them to reframe their experience. They see themselves anew—as leaders, trainers, organizers.

IAF's language, its focus on listening, on action and on constant mentoring—all have helped to develop a unique style of grass-roots leadership. Texas Interfaith organizations typically have one or two organizers and one clerical administrator. Staff members work hard, but try to avoid the dispiriting, frenzied pace that wastes so many organizers after only a few months or years.

Small staffs routinely draw dozens of leaders and hundreds of local members for large meetings with politicians or business people. Large actions complement self-directed committees responsible for research, organizational development, strategy and projects. Annual conventions draw thousands.

The distinctively protracted, intense and structured leadership development pays off in the long term. Many COPS leaders no longer active in local or parish organizations nevertheless offer critical external help from new positions of leadership in their professions, volunteer activities, churches or political offices. Any COPS leader can identify dozens of former leaders who now help the organization raise funds, pass laws and turn out the vote, or who are able to join negotiations as committed allies.

Ramirez hopes to draw thousands next year to COPS' 20th anniversary celebration. But she is much more concerned about developing new leadership.

She also worries about COPS' newest major effort, an initiative to help 600 unemployed San Antonians land good jobs. The project grew out of the shock to local parishes when Levi-Strauss, employer to generations of San Antonians, abruptly closed in January of 1990. The loss of 1,000 jobs left hundreds of families without decent wages or health insurance.

After listening to newly destitute families and interviewing employers, job-training agencies and educational institutions, COPS leaders determined that effective retraining programs were almost nonexistent. Using the clout, connections and confidence the organization has developed over the years, COPS designed Project Quest, in which unemployed job-seekers design individual retraining programs that last up to two years. Training focuses on jobs in industries and professions much in demand, anchored in hiring commitments from local corporations. Stipends and services provide critical economic and moral support.

COPS is entering the one area where community organizing in America has never been able to make much headway: employment. In this battle, COPS will come face to face with the contradictions of the contemporary labor market, and with the limits of its own power in enforcing stated hiring agreements from local employers.

Ramirez is cautiously confident. "We have to do something about jobs. Without jobs, how can people pay for the homes we've won? Or taxes to keep up our new streets and gutters? We'll have problems, and we'll get frustrated. But we'll learn, we'll keep going, and we'll do something to be proud of."

If poor Texas churches seem improbable sources for democratic regeneration after the walloping defeats of the Reagan-Bush years, perhaps other organizations could, like Father Urabazo, listen to Virginia Ramirez. Perhaps, like Ramirez, we could just learn to listen. ◀

John Gardner is the director of organizing for Leadership for Jobs, a project of Work for Wisconsin.

L A B O R

Stand by your man

M

ost of America's union leaders would dearly enjoy a political romance with Bill Clinton. After all, organized labor hasn't been courted by a president in 12 years.

*Can Labor's
uneasy
romance with
Bill Clinton
survive the
president's
affair with
NAFTA?*

By David Moberg
SAN FRANCISCO

Labor leaders gathered at the biennial AFL-CIO convention held here in October understandably felt some excitement when a charming new Democratic president told them that he wants "a new partnership for the labor movement." Clinton also assured the unionists that "this administration shares your values and your hopes and your dreams and the interests of your children." That's appealing—even if Clinton woos every potential political mate in much the same way.

Some union leaders want to like Clinton so much that

they give him the benefit of the doubt on issues such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the administration-supported pact that might cost many U.S. workers jobs. "I think Clinton doesn't really want [NAFTA] to pass," suggested Bob Kalaski, communications director of the Machinists union. And even if Clinton's support for NAFTA is sincere, said Kalaski, "that doesn't stop us from feeling warm toward him."

Yet many of those at the convention had deep misgivings about Clinton. Their doubts were about the administration's vision of economic policy—especially the American worker's role in the new global economy—and of the future of labor unions themselves.

There were also clear shades of difference among union leaders on how—and how much—to pressure Clinton to deliver. Overall, organized labor seems inclined to stick close to the White House on everything except NAFTA—and to hope for the best. Calling Clinton a "proven friend of labor," AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland told convention delegates that "by and large, his agenda is our agenda, and we are

and will be his most reliable troops."

Not everyone was so enthusiastic. "Clinton is friendly to labor," said Bob Wages, president of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW). "He's better than Bush. I voted for him. But he's no 'friend of labor.' He's expended no political capital for any labor issue."

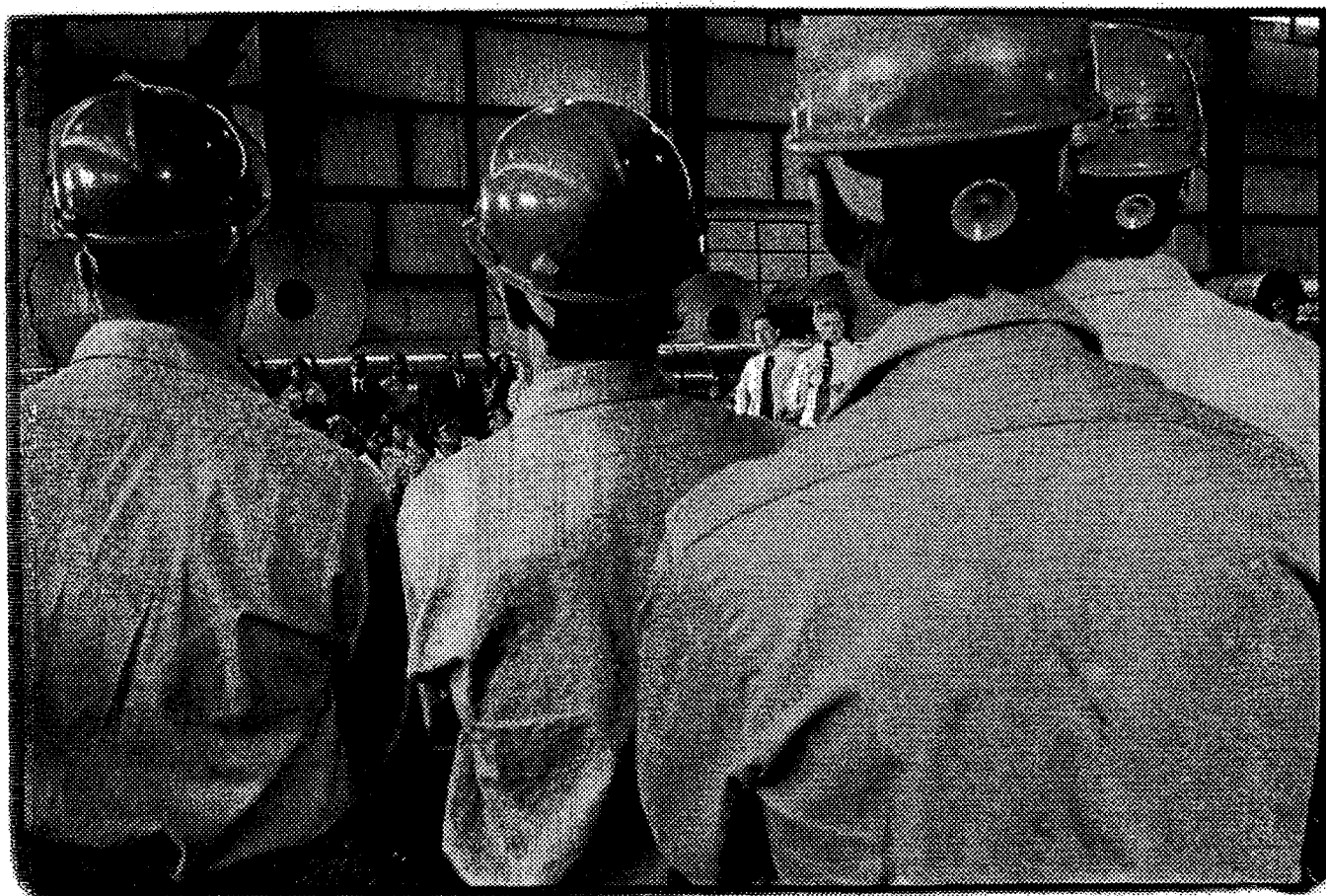
Wages is plugging for a separate labor party that would articulate labor's political viewpoint. He sees the union movement's affection for Clinton as part of labor's "battered wife syndrome" in its marriage with the Democratic Party—always searching for love despite the abuse.

Kirkland was among those who tried to portray the split with Clinton over NAFTA as an isolated policy dispute. But there are signs that the fight over NAFTA has contributed to the development of a new labor perspective on the global economy with widespread political consequences. The most progressive unions are seeking new political alliances, linking up with environmentalists at home and unions abroad, to fight for higher global living standards and stronger democratic rights, both in the workplace and in political life.

This strategy is nationalist in its attempt to protect U.S. workers' living standards and national political autonomy. Yet it is also internationalist in recognizing, as Enzo Friso, the general secretary of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, told delegates, that "poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere."

If labor and its allies succeed in defeating NAFTA, they

©1993 ANDREW LICHTENSTEIN/IMPACT VISUALS



will immediately gear up to advocate negotiation of a new NAFTA. The goal, according to AFL-CIO international economist Mark Anderson, will be a pact that protects labor, democratic rights and the environment to the same degree that the current NAFTA protects property rights.

Labor's concern with NAFTA is partly due to the potential flight of capital to Mexico and loss of jobs in the United States. Steelworker union president Lynn Williams, wearing an "Abajo Con NAFTA" (Down With NAFTA) button, compared the current U.S. trade surplus with Mexico to the earlier trade surplus with China. Now the once-positive balance with China has reversed into a growing U.S. deficit, partly because of China's low wages and worker repression, including the use of prison labor. He fears Mexico-U.S. trade will follow the same path.

The Clinton administration argues that NAFTA mainly endangers low-skilled jobs—and that those workers can be retrained for better jobs. But 8,000 mechanics at United Airlines' San Diego maintenance facility feel their skilled jobs are threatened by a new \$125 million maintenance facility nearing completion just over the border in Tijuana. Many of those mechanics are workers under 30 years old "who got into this profession because it was a good job," argued Dennis Hitchcock, editor of the local union's newspaper. "They went through lots of training. Now they're really scared. I don't think they see Clinton as the agent of

change they hoped for. You'd see more Perot bumper stickers in the parking lot now than fading Clinton-Gore bumper stickers."

Bill Clinton and Al Gore speaking to factory workers in Iowa.

Beyond the immediate issue of jobs, labor sees the NAFTA battle as political. It's not just that NAFTA has become "the symbol of the legitimate grievances of the American working people," as Clinton told the convention. Labor hopes that NAFTA's defeat will guarantee that labor rights—as well as environmental issues—will become central in all future trade deals, including the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Unions also see NAFTA—which, even with Clinton's added agreements on labor, fails to protect basic rights to organize and strike—as a threat to their existence as unions. Capital mobility and the threat of flight to low-wage, non-union locations weakens existing contracts and unions and makes organizing more difficult.

The Clinton administration has compounded organized labor's anxiety about its weakness as an institution. In July, Labor Secretary Robert Reich caused a stir when he said "the jury was out" on whether the workplace of the future required unions or some other institution, from European-style councils to management-initiated employee-involvement schemes. One labor official joked that

Reich had a speech impediment: he couldn't say "union." But Communications Workers president Morty Bahr thinks Reich will be remembered as the best Labor secretary since the New Deal. "His initial instincts are good for workers," Bahr said. "He's learning about unions. He's accessible, very accessible. And I see an evolution toward using the 'U' word."

The Clinton attitude toward unions is influenced by the administration's basic economic paradigm: government's mission today should be to encourage the international competitiveness of businesses in the United States. Reich stresses the importance of greater security, such as guaranteed health care, coupled with training and labor-management cooperation. Few unions would disagree as far as that goes, but they simply argue that strategy is inadequate. Also, even though unions need to heed international market pressures, they exist for reasons beyond making employers more competitive.

Unions want labor law reformed to make it easier for them to organize workers. Reich has appointed a commission to study such reforms—but the administration is even more interested in reforming labor law to enhance competitiveness through labor-management cooperation. Labor, however, fears that such a strategy could undermine unions as independent, worker-controlled institutions. That fear may be compounded by the administration's strategy of seeking support from "progressive" corporations for labor-law reform. No corporation, however progressive, seeks a truly autonomous worker voice.

For example, there is no support from any employer for current legislation to ban permanent replacement of strikers. Reich and Clinton both support the bill, which has passed the House and has majority support in the Senate, but it is not clear how hard they will fight a Republican filibuster.

Labor can chalk up some gains under Clinton: a drive for national health care, expanded tax credits for low-income workers, unpaid family and medical leave, approval of wider political activity by federal employees, and a reversal of the Reagan administrations's ban on hiring air traffic controllers who were fired for striking in 1981. Furthermore, Reich has been one of the most liberal voices in the administration and is now arguing for a modest minimum wage hike. Several former labor officials have government appointments, and unions have easy access to the administration.

"How long has it been since Lane Kirkland could invite all the presidents of the [AFL-CIO] executive council to a pre-Labor Day reception at the White

House?" AFL-CIO political director Richard Walsh asked. "It's been a long, long time."

Yet many labor leaders are still cautious in their judgment of Clinton and Reich. "The jury is out," Bricklayers president John Joyce said. "Their heart's in the right place, but it will take time for parts of the administration to understand the importance of labor."

Joyce wants more White House "commitment to the collective bargaining process" and to economic growth over deficit reduction. "It's the [Clinton] economic vision that I'm not satisfied with," he said.

Unions are more encouraged by Clinton's commitment to health care reform. But, despite continued labor influence on the details of the Clinton proposal, many unions remain worried about what the final legislation will look like after it goes through Congress. For that reason, some long-time advocates of Canadian-style national health insurance, like Clothing and Textile (ACTWU) union president Jack Sheinkman, want to keep the "single-payer" movement alive as leverage against excessive compromise.

On most issues, labor is now focusing its political pressure more on Congress than on Clinton. Several key senators have been targeted by union strategists in an effort to pick up the last three votes needed to end a filibuster over striker replacement. For example, several hundred workers, including permanently replaced printers who had gone on strike, marched on Georgia Sen. Sam Nunn's

Fine mess

Why is a Democratic administration taking a position before the Supreme Court that could destroy one of the nation's most progressive unions and undermine collective bargaining? In late September, Solicitor General Drew Days filed a brief supporting the imposition of more than \$52 million in fines against the United Mine Workers for its 1989-90 battle against the Pittston coal company, largely fought to defend worker and retiree health care. A Virginia circuit court judge had imposed the civil contempt fines, but the union and company asked that the fines be dropped as part of the settlement. The judge refused but scaled down the amount. The appeals court overturned the fines, then the Virginia Supreme Court upheld them.

The Mine Workers argued that the fines were in effect criminal penalties, which would have required stronger standards of proof in court, and were unconstitutionally excessive in any case. The Labor Department backed the union position. But the Solicitor General apparently acted to protect the government's interest in being able to freely use civil fines and penalties.

If the United Mine Workers lose, they could be wiped out. That would almost certainly mean widespread chaos throughout the coal fields, where a prolonged strike of 17,700 miners continues on behalf of a new national contract. Settlements of other labor-management disputes could be hampered if the parties could not count on government cooperation in dropping legal charges accumulated during difficult strikes.

—D.M.

Atlanta office.

Although Walsh and other union political strategists shy away from making NAFTA a litmus test for labor political support, other union leaders are likely to pull the plug on Democrats who vote for the pact. "It will be damn tough for local people to recommend to our national political league to make contributions to candidates who vote for NAFTA," said Machinists president George Kourpias. "It's our jobs at stake."

Clinton, however, will be exempt from the same standard. "I don't have the luxury of rejecting him on one issue," Kourpias said.

Whatever Clinton's shortcomings, however, most labor leaders celebrate the end of the Reagan-Bush era. It makes no difference whether Clinton is pro- or anti-labor, argues Atlanta central labor council president Stewart Acuff. What's important is that the current administration gives labor more space in which to operate. And there are signs that organizing is picking up slightly, although it will take a massive wave of organizing to halt the steady decline of union strength. Unions are winning a slightly higher percentage of representation elections. They are also successfully exploiting other pressure tactics to force employers to recognize them.

Partly as a result of the NAFTA fight, labor is also turning more to international cooperation. Such efforts range from strengthening formal ties at the top among unions to organizing informal worker-to-worker encounters across borders. For example, the Machinists recently threatened to create difficulties in bargaining with Crown, Cork & Seal if the corporation did not direct its South African subsidiary to rehire workers fired during a one-day walkout to protest political violence. Then, in a difficult dispute with National Can, the Machinists received pledges of workplace actions from French unions against Pechiney, the French multinational owner. Both actions succeeded.

Hand in hand with this more internationalist outlook, several unions have become active in organizing illegal immigrant workers. They want to revise the current AFL-CIO policy, which favors sanctions against employers who hire undocumented workers, since they believe the policy is ineffective, discriminatory and a hindrance to organizing.

Much of labor's hierarchy will be inclined to make NAFTA an exception; they favor cultivating ties with Clinton in the hopes of winning his support. Clinton will likely provide just enough to retain labor's political support and little more.

Yet other labor leaders favor a tougher stance. "If I negotiated with the oil industry the way we've negotiated with Clinton," the OCAW's Wages said, "my guys would be working for a nickel an hour buck naked."

ACTWU president Sheinkman argued for more grassroots political activity to increase union clout. "We don't own the president, and he doesn't own us," he said. "Rank-and-file mobilization is the key. The battle is going to take place outside the Beltway."

SUNY Press

TWO BOOKS BY TONY SMITH

Dialectical Social Theory and Its Critics
From Hegel to Analytical Marxism
and Postmodernism

"...significantly advances our understanding of Hegel's contribution to Marx." — *Ethics*
173 pages • \$14.95 paper • ISBN 0-7914-1048-X

The Logic of Marx's Capital
Replies to Hegelian Criticisms

"...a 'must read' for those intrested in the philosophical dimension of Marxism."

— *The Review of Metaphysics*
271 pages • \$19.95 paper • ISBN 0-7914-0268-1

State University of New York Press
c/o CUP Services • PO Box 6525 • Ithaca, NY 14851
Please add \$3 shipping/handling for first book ordered, 50¢ each additional copy. MasterCard, VISA, AMEX accepted.

MONEY, MURDER, AND THE AMERICAN DREAM Wilding from Wall Street to Main Street

CHARLES DERBER



"A thoughtful and provocative call for America to look itself in the mirror and face what it sees."

— Robert Reich

Available now in paperback

ff Faber and Faber, Inc.
50 Cross Street • Winchester, MA 01890

BLACK AMERICA

Crime, race and candor

W

With our racial discourse mired in euphemism, Louis Farrakhan reaps the rewards of a rudimentary candor.

By Salim Muwakkil

hen the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) welcomed Louis Farrakhan into the fold of legitimate leadership during the group's recent 25th Annual Legislative Weekend—apologizing for his exclusion from the recent march on Washington and pledging to establish a closer relationship with the Nation of Islam (NOI)—the action triggered an explosion of condemnation in the mainstream press.

By contrast, the news of the apparent rapprochement between Farrakhan and the mainstream black leadership was wildly applauded throughout much of the black community, especially among grass-roots leaders. According to John Cashin Jr., a respected figure in the civil rights community and a nationally syndicated columnist, the CBC's September 16 event was "possibly the most significant

event this decade in black history." Whether we like it or not, he added, "Farrakhan speaks for a substantial component of an organized black America. And he has a disciplined organization of his own that only fools will ignore."

The dramatically different responses of the country's white mainstream and the African-American subculture vividly reveal the dimensions of our widening racial divide and portend a troubling future.

Nowhere are the evasions of our racial discourse more evident than on the questions of race and crime. As racial divisions continue to grow, a yawning gap is also emerging between the black middle class and the group formerly called the underclass but now regularly referred to as the ghetto poor. Fueled by the savage indifference of the Reagan-Bush years, membership in this group—along with crime and social pathology—has grown enormously in recent years, and its influence reaches well beyond ghetto boundaries.

A study released last year found that black teenagers in urban communities are woefully disaffected from the core civic values of U.S. society.

Conducted by the black-owned market research firm MEE Productions, Inc., under the auspices of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the study found that African-American youths were being socialized by "hip-hop street culture" to reject mainstream norms. After surveying black youths in cities across the country, the study concluded that the rejection of authority typical to young people, combined with the unique pitfalls of urban street life, has left them almost as alienated from the African-American mainstream as from the hegemonic white culture.

The study was commissioned to assess how anti-drug, AIDS prevention and other mainstream messages were being received in America's ghettos. It found that the lives of black youths are dominated by a perverse value system that dismisses such messages as inauthentic and corny. "An effective strategy for reaching this audience with these messages simply doesn't exist," the study concluded.

This alienated audience contains the population segment largely responsible for the scourge of crime and violence that has caught the attention of the nation of late. But in these days of correct and incorrect politics, few are willing to connect crime to race. Unfortunately, our squeamishness about putting a racial face on crime has convinced many that racist extremists are the only ones willing to acknowledge that troubling reality.

It seems obvious to me that increased candor about crime's racial disparities (for both the victims and the victimizers) would allow us to more effectively come to grips with one significant dimension of our society's crime problem. Why, for instance, do black males—who represent approximately 6 percent of the overall population—make

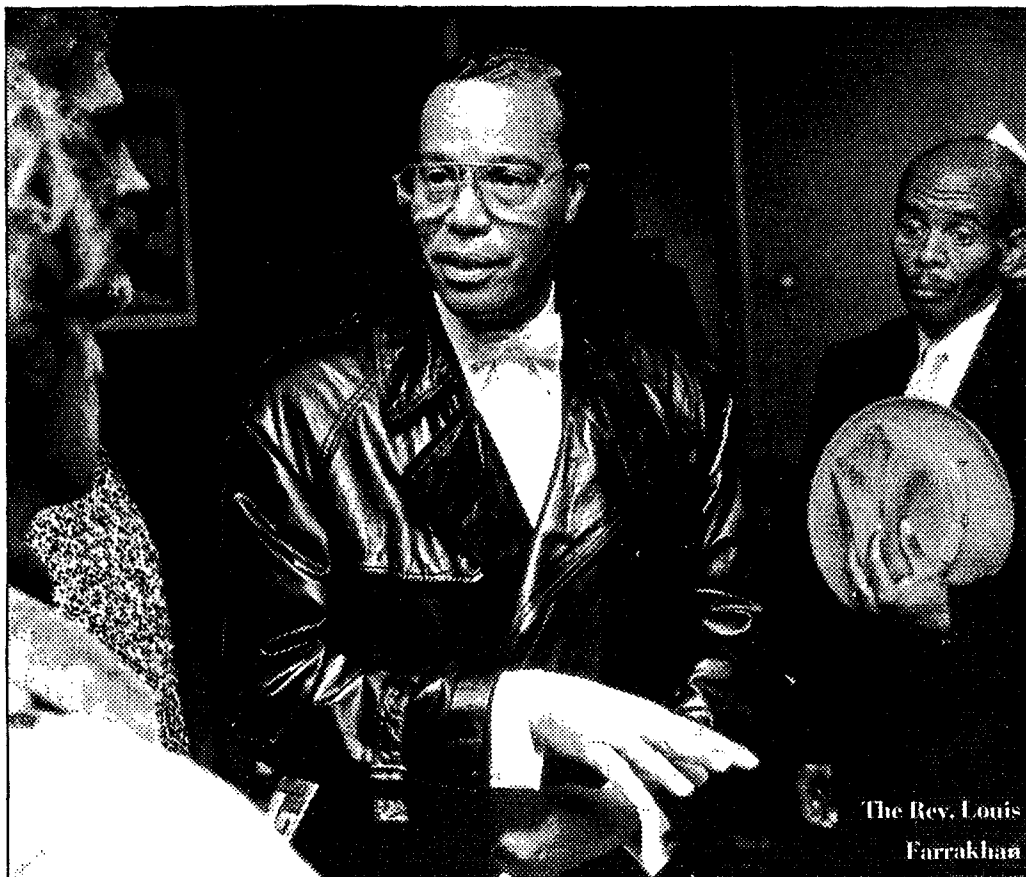
up nearly 50 percent of the national prison population? If this question is omitted from the public discourse, that gross disparity easily lends itself to the genetic arguments of the racist extremist.

If we can get beyond the reductionist rationale of biogenetics—a rationale that enjoys a high, though clandestine, level of popular belief—it is easy enough to trace that racial disparity to a unique history of 200-plus years of chattel slavery and another century of legal apartheid. That etiological exercise would prod our society into an honest acknowledgment of slavery's crippling legacy, something it historically has been loath to examine.

However, if we're reluctant even to note blacks' disparate incarceration rates, more comprehensive examinations of the circumstances are seldom attempted. For example, Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) has proposed a bill designed to investigate the long shadow of slavery, but his legislation has been stifled by congressional indifference. Meanwhile, our politicians continue to propose the usual remedies, mouthing the predictable nostrums while burying serious racial discourse beneath an avalanche of coded platitudes and euphemisms. The conservatives talk tough about vigorous law enforcement, state-sanctioned vengeance and interminable prison sentences; the liberals dissent, thank you, and insist on less Draconian approaches—although as the specter of crime grows more ominous, those distinctions are diminishing.

Numerous studies have revealed that most black criminals lack all but the most basic marketable skills and many are bereft of even a rudimentary education. The problem, and therefore the solution, seems obvious. But in their zeal to quell the rising fears of their constituents—and in their reluctance to acknowledge historic wrongs—most politicians ignore the obvious. African-Americans, the primary victims of this scourge of crime, are watching these cultural evasions with great dismay, as successive administrations initiate their assaults on crime without attention to the context.

Most members of the CBC were elected to continue the civil rights movement's momentum toward a society without racial disparities of any kind, but as the number of black elected officials has grown, the problems plagu-



The Rev. Louis
Farrakhan

ing black Americans instead have multiplied. Increasingly, as the Robert Woods Johnson study has noted, black politicians are being dismissed as irrelevant “sell-outs” by those most in need of their mediation.

Farrakhan, on the other hand, is quite popular among those same groups. When he chides elected officials for naively believing in the false promises of “white America,” his accusations have the unfortunate ring of truth. Moreover, the NOI's nominal success in collective economics and in instilling a sense of moral rectitude in his disciples strikes a responsive chord among those haplessly suffering through the accelerated deterioration of the nation's inner cities. The group's success in rehabilitating substance abusers and transforming sociopaths into respectable-looking workaholics has added another dimension of credibility to Farrakhan and his minions.

Meanwhile, those who condemn the Black Muslim minister offer nothing but tired bromides to those battling the forces of decay. And even those politicians who urge their beleaguered constituents to keep hope alive have little to show for their faith in the system. Undoubtedly, Farrakhan and his assorted imitators are peddling a pernicious racism, and they must be engaged and called to account for that social poison. But simply to dismiss the minister, as the *New York Times* did in an editorial response to the CBC meeting, as a “free-lance hater” without portfolio “who would soon drop from sight if the press ceased to cover” him is badly, and sadly, to miss the point.

Turn Couch Potatoes Into Citizen Activists

with
**Ralph Nader's
Civics for Democracy**

Civics for Democracy is an extraordinary book... I wish it could be read by every young person in the country - we might then have a new generation that would remake a society in need of change.
Howard Zinn, author, *A People's History of the United States*

Civics for Democracy should be required curricular material for every high school civics course in the United States...
Barbara Lewis, teacher & author, *A Kid's Guide to Social Action*

This book is terrific! It's just what's needed in our schools nationwide ...
Lois Marie Gibbs, Executive Director, Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes

If our civics teacher had assigned this remarkable book to our class, we'd have become far more hip and active citizens. This is a "how to" book in the best sense.

Studs Terkel, author, *Race: How Blacks and Whites Feel About the American Obsession*

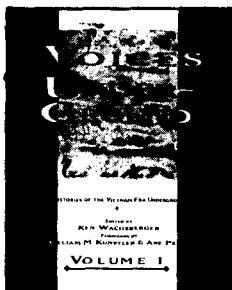
Paperback copies (390 pages) available for \$17.50 (postage paid) from Essential Information, Dept. I, P.O. Box 19405, Washington, DC 20036

Order One for Your School Today

Mica Press is pleased to announce the release of
Voices from the Underground—Volumes 1 & 2.

Volume 1: *Insider Histories of the Vietnam Era Underground Press* is a series of histories of underground newspapers from the Vietnam Era written by the editors, founders or other key people from the newspapers. Forewords to volume 1 are written by William M. Kunstler and Abe Peck.

Volume 2: *Voices from the Underground: A Directory of Resources and Sources on the Vietnam Era Underground Press* is the most in-depth research guide to the period that has ever been published. Articles include an annotated bibliography of books and articles on the Vietnam era underground press and a directory listing of underground publications that appear on microfilm.



Noam Chomsky (Linguistics, MIT):
"Voices ... is a welcome contribution...."

Ben Bagdikian (Journalism, Berkeley):
"Voices ... an invaluable tool...."

Fred Little (Columbia School of Journalism):
"Voices documents the rise of feminist consciousness, and the emerging gay and lesbian cultures of the Sixties."

VOICES FROM THE UNDERGROUND, 8½ x 11, 644 pgs.
\$29.00 each, \$58.00 for both (includes postage and handling).
To order call 1-800-959-9357

EVERY TIME YOU USE AN *In THESE TIMES* MASTERCARD CARD, ITT RECEIVES 15¢

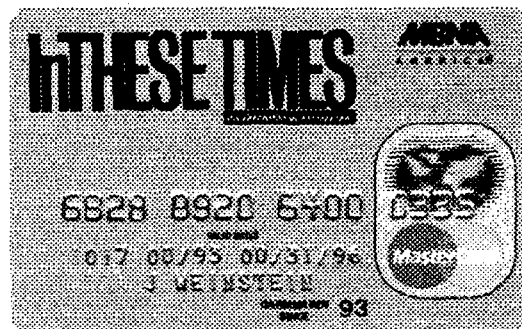
Put your credit card to work for *In THESE TIMES* at no additional cost to you. The magazine receives \$1.50 when you sign up and 15¢ for every charge you make, no matter what the amount of the charge. So put your credit card to good use. Sign up today.

Enjoy the advantages of the *In THESE TIMES* Gold MasterCard without risk... It is issued absolutely free of an annual fee for one full year.¹ Other features include a line of credit up to \$50,000, immediate cash availability and Premium Buyer's Protection.

Extensive travel benefits and services provided at no extra cost, include*:

- Up to \$1,000,000 Common Carrier Travel Accident Insurance
- Supplemental Auto Rental Collision/Loss Damage Insurance
- Up to \$3,000 Supplemental Lost Luggage Protection
- Emergency Cash & Airline Tickets

MBNA America® is one of the world's leading issuers of credit cards. Committed to servicing our members' needs, MBNA America® offers cardholders 24-hour-year-round Customer Satisfaction, one hour processing for credit line increase requests, a lost card registration service and an emergency replacement card service.



CALL NOW TO APPLY!

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

1-800-847-7378 ext. 5000

Be sure to use this priority code when calling: KZPU.

¹ 17.9% Annual Percentage Rate. \$40 Annual Fee for the Gold MasterCard and \$20 for the Silver MasterCard waived the first year. Transaction Fee For Bank and ATM Cash advances: 2% of each Cash Advance (\$2 Minimum, \$25 Maximum); Transaction Fee For Premium Access Checks® and Preferred Access Checks® Cash Advances: 1% of each Cash Advance (\$2 Minimum, \$10 Maximum). Late Payment Fee: \$15. Over-The-Credit-Limit-Fee: \$15.

*Certain restrictions apply to these benefits. The summary of credit card benefits accompanying the credit card Premium Access Checks® and Preferred Access Checks® describes coverage terms, conditions and limitations.

MBNA America® and Premium Access Checks® are federally registered Service Marks of MBNA America Bank, N.A. The account is issued and administered by MBNA America Bank, N.A. MasterCard® is a federally registered Service Mark of MasterCard International, Inc., used pursuant to license. The information about the cost of the card described above is accurate as of 2/93, to find out what may have changed call 1-800-847-7378 ext. 5000. © 1993 MBNA America Bank, N.A.

DIALOGUE

Bad deal

By Robert Lehman

Along with this piece, I've sent a dollar to start a new *In These Times* journalists' travel and mental health fund. I hope enough can be collected to send John Judis outside the Washington Beltway for a while, perhaps to Mexico, before he writes another article like "NAFTA's hard trade-offs" (*In These Times*, Oct. 4).

Instead of looking at real people and institutions—and how they will be affected by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)—Judis has succumbed to the binary beltway bimbo syndrome: one votes yea or nay. The choice is between the transnationals' NAFTA and the transnationals' status quo. "NAFTA may be the best we can do."

"We...?" A few comments:

Why shouldn't a different agreement be negotiated? Wall Street won't call it quits, and there is no need for NAFTA in order for the U.S. and Mexican governments to continue negotiating bilateral tariff reductions for particular industries, for better or worse.

If Clinton is politically unable to initiate new North American talks, so much the better; this can open political space for democratic alternatives. But labor, environmental and other organizations must push their own trade and development initiatives—including alternatives to the General

Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which is still under negotiation. Otherwise, they'll be left responding to the dictates of Wall Street and K Street.

Economic models projecting job impacts for complex trade agreements are usually unreliable, including the Congressional Budget Office's, which Judis apparently preferred because it's in the middle. What is clear is that the job losses will overwhelmingly be those that are accessible—jobs that are often unionized, decently paid and entry-level with skill ladders.

But job gains will be primarily high education and skill jobs, not accessible to those who lose out. If displaced autoworkers are going to be retrained as trade attorneys—working the growth industry of litigating the vague language that George Bush rushed through to have NAFTA ready for the 1992 Republican Convention—then perhaps NAFTA has promise. Check out your local retraining center.

Yes, Mexico will need private capital to develop. But some regulation is in order if capital is to be accessible to Mexican small and community businesses, and if development is to mean more than turning Mexico into an export production zone. Under NAFTA's financial services section, U.S. banks will be well positioned to take over Mexico's banking industry by the end of this decade. Will they

redline Mexican businesses serving the internal market, as they already do in many U.S. communities? What kind of development is possible under various continental rules and institutions, and under Mexico's debt burden? Many options exist. But capital accessibility rather than capital mobility should be the basis of democratic development in North America.

It's a real stretch to consider the labor and environmental commissions as "supranational bodies." Unfortunately, more power is vested in dispute-resolution panels that can undercut local and national sovereignty for the sake of removing trade barriers. There is a need for supranational bodies in some areas, but they must be accountable. The European Community bureaucracy is one feature North America does not need to replicate.

As *In These Times* has frequently shown, NAFTA is a low-cost production rather than a high-wage and investment strategy for manufacturing industries. This is the wrong industrial policy to replace the Cold War, even though it will provide temporary high returns for many corporations.

Sane economic policy, however, is being elbowed out of the way by the investment bankers who bankrolled Clinton's campaign. A glance at the last global hegemon, Great Britain, shows what the political domination of finance and free trade ideologues can do to a country's manufacturing base.

NAFTA and GATT are perfect examples of "the fetishism of commodities" on the international level; the cross-border mobility of goods, services and capital both masks and ignores the complexity of social and ecological relations. Like all previous successful social struggles in the U.S., the momentum to address our social and environmental needs around trade and investment will have to come from below. ◀

Robert Lehman works for the California Fair Trade Campaign.

After the euphoria

By Sam Bahour

Returning from a four-month stay in Palestine just before the historic Rabin-Arafat handshake, I was surprised by the U.S. media's euphoria about the Declaration of Principles between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The *New York Times'* Thomas Friedman, for example, wrote that the Israeli-PLO agreement was "nothing less than the Israeli Bal-four Declaration for the Palestinians." And pro-Palestinian Americans are gleaming with relief and congratulating me on the "beginning" of peace in the Mideast.

All this excitement and hope comes because two "eternal" enemies signed an accord and shook hands on the White House lawn. The pact came after PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat agreed explicitly to recognize the state of Israel and its right to exist in peace and security, while Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin sent a hasty one-sentence letter to Arafat recognizing the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people.

I do not belittle the significance of

the Arafat-Clinton-Rabin meeting. Some drastic step was needed to ameliorate the military occupation that was becoming more repressive and brutal. So why am I so skeptical of the Israeli-PLO Declaration of Principles?

In the first place, the lack of concrete political and geographical concessions from Israel is astounding. The hopes, desires and—most importantly—the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, both those residing under the Israeli occupation and those living in the diaspora, are

*Peace in the
Mideast cannot
be made between
two people,
but rather between
two peoples.*

not mentioned in the text of the declaration.

Before it would recognize the PLO, Israel required the Palestinians to nullify those parts of the Palestinian National Covenant that referred negatively to Israel. This covenant is an internal PLO document that over the years has naturally been superseded by various decisions and statements. Only the Palestine National Congress has the authority to amend the covenant. But, that aside, no one has suggested that Israel alter its unifying principle, Zionism, which has traditionally claimed that "Greater Israel" extends from the Nile to the Euphrates.

The Palestinian National Covenant is similar to the U.S. Declaration of Independence—which, by the way, speaks aggressively against the British and the Native Americans. Britain recognizes the United States, but we have never been asked to amend the Declaration of Independence.

The Declaration of Principles itself contains no commitment by Israel to end—now or in the future—the source of the conflict, *occupation*. The declaration does refer to a timetable for the transfer of authority over some spheres of Palestinian life and for Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho. But it does not mention the 26 years of United Nations-condemned Israeli occupation, including the continued land confiscation, the building of illegal settlements, the economic and military blockade of Jerusalem and the thousands of prisoners being tortured. Without Israel first acknowledging that it is an occupying force, and committing itself to ending the occupation, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will only be entering into another cycle.

Furthermore, the Declaration of Principles leaves it up to a joint Israeli-Palestinian committee to negotiate the majority of the issues that

deal with concrete authority and rights. Crucial issues such as electricity, water, security, the Gaza port, banking, land rights, export-import rights and the environment are all to be negotiated. But, as Jewish-American political scientist and activist Ned Hanauer points out, such negotiations strongly favor Israel. "When negotiations take place between the strong and the weak, the result reflects the power balance, not equity and international law—unless a third party intervenes on behalf of the weak party, in this case the Palestinians," says Hanauer, the executive director of Search for Justice and Equality in Palestine/Israel.

The Palestinians I spoke with this summer, from Nablus to Jerusalem to the Gaza Strip, were all desperate for a change in their situation. Their joy and hope that the accord may lead to brighter days is understandable, after nearly suffocating under 26 years of an internationally condemned occupation. But even these celebrations were muffled only five days after the signing when the Israelis issued an order fining any Palestinian \$150 who displays the flag of Palestine.

The Declaration of Principles also states that both parties will promote a "Marshall Plan" for the region. It seems that President Clinton has fully embraced this concept and is calling for the countries of the world to give their share to peace in the Mideast by donating funds to build a Palestinian infrastructure. This shows that the Clinton administration has a shallow understanding of the PLO as it stands today. When the U.S. announced the Marshall Plan for Europe, as Malcolm Forbes Jr. wrote in *Forbes* magazine in 1991, "The U.S. made sure to pump in capital in a way that went to revive economies rather than to build government bureaucracies. Moreover, Europe had the institutions ... to make good use of this money."

Yet this agreement comes when the PLO is on the brink of bankruptcy. Arafat's mass organizations and insti-

tutions have been largely defunct since the PLO withdrawal from Lebanon in 1982. Two of his top advisers resigned recently from the PLO Executive Committee, claiming a lack of democracy within the PLO leadership. The PLO is not now in a strong position to help build an infrastructure, which is the backbone of the entire agreement.

Unfortunately, the historic handshake in Washington was not accompanied by a historic consensus in Palestine and Israel. Peace is not made between two people but rather between two peoples. Unless the Palestinian and Israeli people have viable and democratic institutions to express and act on their opinions, we can only expect their frustrations to be displayed in the streets of their communities.

The Clinton administration should recognize that the situation in the Mideast got to the brink of disaster only because the U.S. Congress has been under the heavy influence of the pro-Israeli lobby since 1967. If it were

not for the more than \$4 billion that the United States has been granting Israel every year, the occupation would never have ripened.

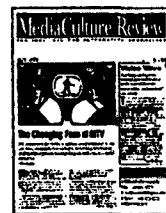
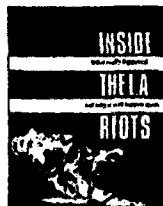
The time has come for Washington to support and recognize the state of Palestine in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip. In the past, the United States delayed opening a relationship with the PLO because Israel, a partner in the conflict, refused to go along. Today, the Palestinian people must be given the opportunity to use the Declaration of Principles to realize Palestinian statehood. Washington could play a positive leadership role by supporting a two-state solution—a secure and independent Israel side by side with a secure and independent Palestine. ▲

Sam Bahour is a Palestinian-American who frequently takes American eyewitness delegations to Palestine and Israel. He recently completed co-editing (with Alice and Staughton Lynd) a book entitled *Homeland: Oral Histories of Palestine and Palestinians*.

If you're sick of pre-digested mainstream news, maybe it's time you took a look at the alternatives.



Facts and Fictions about "Free Trade"—A Reader. Discussions about "free trade" have moved to center stage. NAFTA is hot and the vote will go down to the wire. Read this compelling collection of articles and essays by Jim Hightower, Walter Russell Mead, Thea Lee, Bill Greider, Monika Bauerlein, Jonathan Tasini, Bill Clinton, and many more to get the full picture.



Inside the L.A. Riots: What really happened—and why it will happen again. The true story of the civil unrest in Los Angeles and cities across the country. Articles and essays from more than 60 of America's best independent writers and journalists, including June Jordan, Michael Ventura, Rubén Martínez, Jesse Jackson, Doug Ireland, John Judis, and Ice-T.

Published by the Institute for Alternative Journalism (IAJ), a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening the alternative press and advocating for diverse and independent media voices necessary for a healthy democracy.

Media Culture Review is "a giant step forward in media criticism," according to *The Utne Reader*. MCR offers insightful media criticism and cultural analysis unfiltered by mainstream media. Every issue contains a collection of hard-hitting essays, articles, columns and reviews—some original, and some collected from independent and alternative publications.

	Cost	#	Subtotal
FREE TRADE BOOK	\$15.00		
RIOT BOOK	\$11.95		
\$2 per book postage/handling			
MCR (SIX ISSUES)	\$18.00		
TOTAL			

Name _____
Address _____

Send checks to IAJ, 2025 I Street, NW, #1124, Washington, D.C. 20006

I N T H E A R T S

Charred *Remains*

In adapting Kazuo Ishiguro's novel to the screen, director James Ivory cooked the story down a bit too much.

By Pat Dowell

In James Ivory's adaptation of Kazuo Ishiguro's novel, *The Remains of the Day*, there's a scene that captures the essential nature of Mr. Stevens, the perfect English butler. The scene is a flashback—the film's first glimpse of Stevens (Anthony Hopkins) as a young man.

Horsemen are gathered in the drive of Darlington Hall for a hunt, and Stevens is there among the restless hounds and the pawing steeds. Dressed in the formal attire of the servant, he offers a cup of wine to a mounted gentleman who can't be bothered.

Stevens stretches up his hand with the cup, and while the gent natters on, the butler just stands there. Perfectly still at attention, his arm in what must be an uncomfortable position, Stevens is infinitely patient, unflappable, entirely at the disposal of

his "betters." A human being transformed into a mere convenience.

That image of Stevens sums up the perfection of Hopkins' performance, too, which is an exercise in superfluous intensity. He excels in giving weight to the insubstantial. Physically hunched and conspicuously self-effacing, Hopkins is very mannered here. His hypnotic performance is cold and yet likely to compel you to tears. He is the best reason for seeing this movie. Ivory—who has directed some fine literary adaptations, such as *Room with a View* and last year's *Howards End*—here lapses into old habits that produced such plodders as *The Europeans* and *Maurice*. *The Remains of the Day* is likewise a bit airless, its emotions too neatly labeled.

The movie first reveals Stevens as an older man in the '50s, adapting to new circumstances and a new owner of Darlington Hall—an American, no less (Christopher Reeve). As Stevens makes a car journey to visit a former co-worker, Miss Kenton (Emma Thompson), he recalls the glory days in the '20s and '30s when he served Lord

Darlington. James Fox plays Darlington as an affable but rather dim and malleable old twit.

Gradually the movie reveals in flashbacks the unspoken tragedy of Stevens' life. Lord Darlington's political dabblings were of the fascist sort, and Miss Kenton was the unacknowledged love of Stevens' life. Upstairs, Stevens molded himself to fit a master unworthy of loyalty, while downstairs his unfailing formality pushed away a woman who loved him. Stevens' journey to Miss Kenton holds the promise of correcting one of those mistakes.

In contrast with Hopkins' huge feat of concentration—which gives the impression almost of a high-wire act—Emma Thompson's performance as Miss Kenton seems effortless and subtle. Of course, she appears more human and less actorish in part because her role is not so showy and her character is an altogether sympathetic one.

Miss Kenton has made her sacrifices and compromises—to a lesser degree than Stevens—but at least she knows that's what they are. When Stevens carries out Lord Darlington's order in the '30s to fire two Jewish maids (screenwriter Ruth Praver Jhabvala has pumped up the poignance of the situation by making them refugees), Miss Kenton is



The Remains of the Day
Directed by James Ivory

outraged. She threatens to resign, but doesn't. She is visibly ashamed to explain her reason: like most of us, she needs the job.

Stevens, by contrast, accepts his master's anti-Semitism (and everything else) as the more informed and loftier perspective of an aristocratic diplomat. Hindsight, in the '50s, allows Stevens to acknowledge the injustice. But he continues to make allowances for the impressionable Lord Darlington. Stevens concludes that his master simply fell in with bad company during that summer he spent hobnobbing with Sir Oswald Mosley, Britain's would-be *führer*, and his blackshirts.

Not that the movie identifies Mosley precisely. Political specifics have been drained out of the story to a surprising degree. The viewer has to be knowledgeable enough to put a name to the fascists, the appeasers, even the specific goal of an unofficial 1923 conference held at Darlington Hall (to urge support for Germany's call to soften the terms of the Versailles Treaty), and the agenda of a midnight meeting between the prime minister and the German ambassador (who was trying to get the king to visit Hitler).

In the book, Stevens spelled these things out as the narrator, but the movie leaves the viewer in a kind of vague fog of Nazis and starched collars and formal dinners. It's almost as though adapter Jhabvala had the same lack of confidence in the audience's understanding of history that Lord Darlington and his friends have of Stevens' world-view.

After dinner one night in 1935, a politician uses Stevens to show that the masses are not fit to decide "the fate of nations." He makes a great show of asking the butler arcane questions about the gold standard, the real import of a recent French speech on North Africa, and so on. To each question, Stevens replies evenly and with the utmost courtesy, offering the answer that he thinks is expected of him: "I'm sorry, sir, but I am unable to be of assistance in this matter." His "ignorance" occasions fond chuckles and agreement all around that democracy is outmoded.

Hopkins carries it off beautifully, with just a flicker of resentment lighting up Stevens' unperturbed expression as the question is put to him. Then Stevens gives in almost joyously to more familiar feelings of satisfaction at the opportunity to grovel, to "inhabit" (as Stevens in the book says a



great butler must) his role as servant. There's an element of genuine perversion in Stevens, a masochism of the soul, that Hopkins makes deliciously, painfully clear.

It is entirely up to the actors to reveal such complex responses to oppression—the feigned ignorance with its illusion of dignity, the self-inflicted invisibility, the joy of submission. A screenplay can't have Stevens providing the exposition he did in the book without seeming ridiculously wordy. Narration must be reduced to the essentials, as it is here. Consequently, much that is in Stevens' head in the book must be moved outside in the movie. What he thinks and observes therefore becomes to some extent the "facts" that the camera shows us. It would take a movie that subverts conventional film grammar to get inside Stevens' head, but James Ivory is a sincerely conventional storyteller who naturalizes psychology—he and Jhabvala make Stevens' inner world into an external reality.

The easiest thing to open up is the love story. It becomes a more explicit tragedy in the movie than in the book, all its possibilities ended with a melodramatic flourish—a gigantic, lingering, slow-motion closeup of a last handshake between the aging servants.

The relative abstractions of politics and Stevens' great question in the book—"of what is dignity comprised?"—are less easily externalized. They tend to recede emotionally in the movie, which transforms Ishiguro's story into the sort of tragedy that these moviemakers think we can understand—a romance. That is a kind of condescension that Stevens himself might embrace.

IN PRINT

Dying of consumption

By David Futrelle

The seductions of the consumer culture have proven almost as irresistible to academics as they have to the rest of us. Radical urbanists still rail against the "malling of America," and feminists decry the "beauty myths" promulgated by the glamour of advertising. But the ritual denunciations of commercialism that were once a taken-for-granted part of radical politics and academic criticism have faded away into a sometimes uneasy, sometimes downright enthusiastic, acceptance of consumer society by many of those who in years past would have looked upon even the most innocent of advertising circulars with suspicion.

As William Leach notes in the introduction to *Land of Desire*, his sprawling, intermittently brilliant history of the origins of modern American consumer culture, contemporary students of consumerism tend "toward praise and adulation—and even people who purport to be socialists or radical cultural critics have embraced the idea that consumer capitalism has been (and is) basically and positively liberatory." The new academic celebrants of consumerism are not the first nominal progressives to glorify material pleasure: Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, an astonishingly popular utopian tract in the closing years of the 19th century, presented the brave new world of the future as a giant department store.

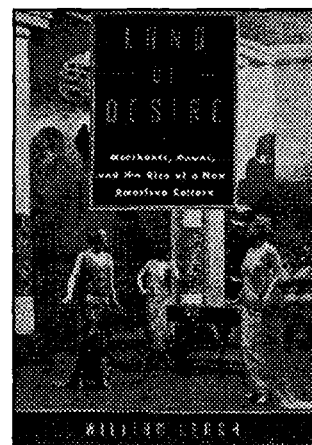
To some extent the more positive vision of consumerism presented in the new scholarship is a welcome relief from the vaguely conspiratorial, top-down accounts of manipulative advertisers and manipulated consumers popular in the '70s and early '80s. The new scholarship has shown, often in a subtle and nuanced fashion, the ways in which ordinary people have used consumer culture for their own ends, have

grasped onto its promise of liberation from the stultifying confines of tradition.

But much of this new "critical" work, in its relentless focus on style over substance, has proven as distracting as the ads themselves. The denizens of cultural studies programs may gain a certain smug satisfaction from reading vaguely subversive deconstructions of Nike commercials to each other, but their postmodern radicalism makes little difference to the workers in Indonesia toiling away for a dollar a day actually making the shoes. One could offer, easily enough, an economic explanation of this particular myopia: academics, it hardly needs saying, look upon the world from a position of relative comfort, and they have seen more of the pleasures of consumption than they have of the tedium of assembly-line production. But few, even the truly needy, can escape (or want to escape) the lures of the capitalist cornucopia. The offices of *In These Times*, located in what can charitably be described as a low-rent district in Chicago, are surrounded by "dollar" stores, sidewalk stalls and discount palaces. The merchandise is shoddy, but business is brisk.

Leach, contrary to the current fashions, is not what you'd call a fan of consumer culture. His massive volume, many years in the making, offers a bracingly acerbic account of the transformation of American culture in the wake of the turn-of-the-century revolutions in mass production and distribution, which filled new stores with "a multitude of goods ... to satisfy needs that no one knew they had." *Land of Desire* is part business history, part cultural critique in the tradition of Thorstein Veblen, the idiosyncratic American philosopher and economist who launched the first (and in many ways still the most profound) sustained assault on what he called conspicuous consumption.

At the heart of Leach's book is his account of the development of modern department stores in the early years of this century—grand and glamorous temples of consumer fantasy, filled with bright lights and extravagant displays of artificial opulence. The "show windows" that first graced only the fanciest metropolitan department stores—some featuring "live manikins" dressed in the latest fashions—spread even to the farthest reaches of South Dakota. Writer (and sometime window-dresser) L.



Land of Desire:
Merchants, Power
and the Rise of a
New American Culture
 By William Leach
 Pantheon
 510 pp., \$30

Frank Baum enthused about one "gorgeous Carnival" set up to display the latest wares, in which female models served as display cases of sorts for a variety of goods, from fruits to miniature typewriters, which were ingeniously draped over their bodies. "Even the male mind, naturally obtuse to such matters, is forced to marvel at the beauty of the display," Baum gushed.

As the stores grew larger and more luxurious, advertisers, who once were content to simply list the products available, turned to elaborate and often fanciful strategies to create and nurture new desires, to promote the planned obsolescence of fashion. "The way out of over-production," one fashion expert commented in 1909, "must lie in finding out what the woman at the counter is going to want; *make it; then* promptly drop it and go on to something else to which fickle fashion is turning her attention." Not everyone was so enamored of the new glorification of instant consumer gratification. Novelist Edna Ferber looked with some small horror on one department store show window in 1911, describing the display as "a breeder of anarchism, a destroyer of contentment, a second feast of Tantalus."

Land of Desire presents less a coherent narrative than a set of essays on related themes. Leach's penchant for digression is in many ways a strength: he can range in the course of a few pages from conventional economic history to unconventional cultural critique—writing with acumen about topics as varied as Herbert Hoover's Commerce Department and the proliferation of department store Santas, detailing the lives of personalities as distinct as department store giant John Wanamaker and commercial artist



Maxfield Parrish. ("A handsome man, Parrish often posed in the nude for the male and also for the female figures in his own posters," Leach reports without comment.)

Leach shows how deeply the new philosophy of consumerism permeated the culture, how the new glorification of desire found its way not only into advertising but into philosophy and religion as well. The cult of "mind cure" popular in these years promised, like consumer society itself, instant contentment. "Wish pulses and wish structure," economist Simon Patten cheerily (if somewhat abstrusely) wrote, are "the key which unlocks the mysteries of organic evolution."

But if Leach's digressive style leads in many cases to unexpected and illuminating insights, the overall result is to leave his book in the end evasive and incomplete. If others have presented a too-sanguine vision of consumer society, Leach is so sweeping in his indictment that he comes off at times as the modern equivalent of the turn-of-the-century preachers who railed against the corrupting effects of "luxury." What's worse, though, is that Leach is so concerned with the machinations of elites—merchants, advertisers, intellectuals—that he ignores the ways in which consumerism has been integrated into the daily lives of ordinary people. The fantasies of consumption can be a distraction, but the empowering effects of commercialized leisure helped to free many young workers (especially women) in the early years of this century from the bonds of traditional docility, pushing them to a less accommodating posture toward both parents and bosses.

It makes little sense to uncritically celebrate such commercialized liberation, but we can't just ignore it. Consumer society, far from lulling us all into complacency, stirs up desires it cannot fulfill. Perhaps, politically, this is not such a bad thing.

Down in the dumpster

By Steven G. Kellman

“When I began this account I was living under a shower curtain in a stand of bamboo in a public park.” The first sentence of Lars Eighner’s extraordinary new book echoes nothing so much as the opening to one of the classics of American literature: “When I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived alone, in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which I had built myself on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labor of my hands only.”

Henry David Thoreau’s experiment in self-reliance consisted of building a sylvan home and living there for two years, alone, deliberately. Eighner did not choose to be dispossessed, but he and his dog Lizbeth spent three years without a home. *Travels with Lizbeth* is an account of an experiment in living life deliberately, on the road and on the street, written with uncommon clarity, grace and wit.

Eighner worked as an attendant at the Austin State Hospital for seven years before a conflict with his employers obliged him to resign or be fired. “I had always been in trouble at the asylum, for the humane published policies of the institution conflict with the abusive habits of some of the staff, and I often found myself in an unpopular position,” he explains. Unable now to pay rent, he was not very popular with potential landlords. Because he had quit his job, he was ineligible for unemployment compensation. Because of the recession and because he lacked credentials, he could not find another position. Because he was not *already* on public assistance, he could not receive public assistance. And so Eighner’s odyssey began. It took Odysseus 10 years to get back home, Eighner three to find one. He currently shares an

apartment in Austin with Lizbeth and a human roommate.

In the summer of 1989, when Eighner found himself outdoors, he set himself three rules: no matter how desperate, he would not steal, panhandle, or relinquish his dog. Believing that the grass might be greener in the Golden State, he set off for California in the vain hope of being hired by a magazine that had published a few of his stories.

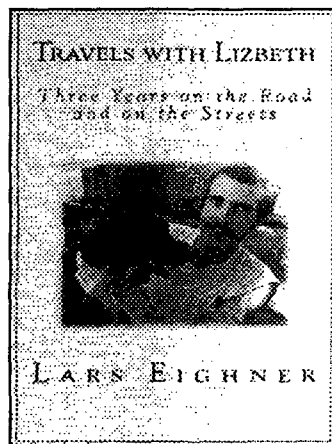
Some of Eighner’s most vivid prose recounts his journey, by thumb, from Austin to L.A. Relying on the kindness of strangers, man and dog also encountered their cruelty. In Tucson, stranded for four days without a ride, the two were robbed and ridiculed. “I recalled an anthropology professor I had studied under once, who in proposing a list of cultural universals cited the duty to aid the wayfarer as a common aspect of desert culture,” Eighner notes ironically. “He had never, I supposed, been to Tucson.”

Yet Southern California was not much more hospitable. Eighner found brief employment writing scripts for adult videos, but he and Lizbeth were soon back on I-10, sharing the road to Texas with assorted psychotics and saints. In Austin, they took up serial residence in Shoal Creek and Adams Park and on the porch of a foreclosed bar named Sleazy Sue’s. They faced serious challenges from fire ants, dysentery and enlightened officials who would admit only three explanations for homelessness—drug addiction, alcoholism and psychiatric disorder. “To be poor is to be subject utterly to the agents of the law,” writes Eighner, who, forced to seek medical relief for clotting in his leg, had to fight to free himself from the licensed sadists who locked him up in their hospital and treated him as if he were a junkie, a wino, a lunatic.

The most memorable section of *Travels with Lizbeth* is the author’s disquisition on the art of scavenging. First

printed in *The Threepenny Review* and then in *Harp-er’s*, the chapter he titles “Dumpster Diving” has already added a pungent phrase to the language. Eighner, who describes himself as “uncommonly stout,” sustained himself and Lizbeth by periodic forays into the industrial-sized trash bins that provide a public pantry of sorts in Austin. “Dumpster diving has serious drawbacks as a way of life,” he warns, though—specifying botulism among them.

But with the same shrewd scrutiny he applies to everything else, Eighner learns to glean enough safe edibles to be able to donate



**Travels with Lizbeth:
Three Years on the Road
and on the Streets**

By Lars Eighner
St. Martin's Press
271 pp., \$19.95

his own surplus to the city food bank. He also acquires clothing, radios, calculators and even a personal computer. Patrolling the streets surrounding the university, he learns to live by the academic calendar, culling his richest harvests when students are discarding and departing. (He's not the only one to thrive on ivy. Eighner describes the life of one institutional parasite named Don, who acquires a set of master keys and, passing himself off as a professor, manages to eat, sleep, shower and survive unchallenged within the cells of a huge university.)

Dumpster diving is a tribute to the profligacy of a consumer society in which more is thrown away than consumed. In a culture of abundance, where nothing but appetite is encouraged to last, Eighner is a renegade recycler, a throwback to the frugal philosophy of Thoreau. "I think of scavenging as a modern form of self-reliance," he writes. "In any event, after 10 years of government service, where everything is geared to the lowest common denominator, I find it refreshing to have work that rewards initiative and effort."

Eighner's book is richer in observation than in narrative. "A homeless life," he observes, "has no storyline." Home is the meridian that endows digression with direction. But, as Eighner's exquisite prose proves, there's nothing like homelessness to concentrate the mind.

Eighner insists that he is no spokesman for the homeless, that he did not make a point of congregating with others in similar straits. But his book

speaks eloquently of the perils and pleasures of living by one's wits. An endearing demonstration of harmony between human and canine, it is also a powerful indictment of human indifference to colleagues in the species. ▲

Steven G. Kellman, a professor of comparative literature at the University of Texas at San Antonio, is the author, most recently, of *The Plague: Fiction and Resistance* (Twayne).

Finally, something to celebrate!

IN THESE TIMES celebrates 17 years of publication this fall! Be part of our celebration and place a greeting ad in our anniversary issue. We love words of praise (who doesn't?) and encouragement, and, of course, ads promoting you and your work. Drop us a line by October 11, 1993, and we'll create an ad for you or send us your camera-ready artwork. Finally, here's something to celebrate.

<input type="checkbox"/> Full Page	\$2400	7" x 9"	<input type="checkbox"/> Quarter Page	\$450	3" x 4½"
<input type="checkbox"/> Half Page	1300	7" x 4"	<input type="checkbox"/> Sixth Page	390	2" x 4½"
<input type="checkbox"/> Third Page	900	4" x 4"	<input type="checkbox"/> Greeting Ad	45	

name _____

address _____

city _____

state _____

zip _____

phone _____

IN THESE TIMES • 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave. • Chicago, IL 60647 • (312) 772-0100 ext. 236

DRAFTING A WILL?

Please consider
a bequest to the
Institute for Public Affairs
for IN THESE TIMES.

For information, write or call:
Beth Schulman,
Associate Publisher
2040 N. Milwaukee Ave.
Chicago, IL 60647
(312) 772-0100



Complete the cycle. Buy recycled.™

Separating your trash is great, but you're not really recycling until you buy recycled products. Many community recycling programs have started enthusiastically—only to close because that can't find a market for their collected recyclables. It's up to each of us to help

create that market. That's why we started Atlantic Recycled Paper Company—to make recycled paper products readily available to businesses and individuals. We carry unbleached papers with the highest post-consumer waste content available! Give us a call.

**Atlantic
Recycled
Paper Co.**

Envelopes
Copy Paper
Printing Paper
Computer Paper

Napkins
Toilet Paper
Paper Towels
Facial Tissues

FOR FREE CATALOGUE: (800) 323-2811

**Cartoonist/
art director
Peter Hannan
thinks the ITT
T-shirt gives
him a whole
new look.**



Photo by David Schulz

Humor him.
Order your ITT T-shirt today.
2-color 100% heavyweight cotton.
Sizes M-L-XL just \$14.95
(Illinois residents pay \$16.25)
Facial features not included.
Write: ITT T-shirt
2040 North Milwaukee Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60647
To use MC/VISA, call Theresa at
312-772-0100, X221



C L A S S I F I E D S

▶ HELP WANTED

DIRECTOR INTERNAL/EXTERNAL ORGANIZING. Labor union for 20,000+ public/private workers in Oregon. Senior staff member to manage team of 25 organizers. Requires experienced unionist with background in supervision, organizing, contract negotiations/administration, politics. Emphasis on worker mobilization and empowerment. \$45,156-\$55,636 ann. EEOE. Résumé: Alice L. Dale, Exec. Dir., OPEU, POB 12159, Salem, OR 97309-0159, by 11/12/93.

DIRECTOR, POLITICAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATES. Political Research Associates, located in Cambridge, Mass., is currently searching for a new Director. The Director works with a staff of three, and has primary responsibility for fundraising, administration, and political vision for the organization. Political Research Associates is a 12-year-old research and activist center that monitors right-wing and anti-democratic organizations and trends. The activities of the organization include maintaining an archive of primary and secondary material on the right wing, publishing in several formats, filling information requests from individuals and organizations across the country, working with the media and publishing a newsletter titled "The Public Eye." Responsibilities: to oversee the management of the organization, working with the staff and the Board of Directors to set direction and determine progress in public edu-

cation and social change goals; to represent and promote PRA's work, including public speaking, networking with colleagues across the country, and occasional media appearances; and responsibility for raising the organization's annual budget of approximately \$200,000 from foundations, individuals and the general public. Qualifications: commitment to the mission of PRA, including a history of work in related fields, broadly defined; demonstrated ability to fundraise from foundations and individual donors; experience in management of an organization of similar size, using a cooperative style of leadership; and Ph.D. in the social sciences desirable, but not required. Salary is negotiable within the range of \$38,000 to \$42,000. Benefits include four weeks paid vacation annually, plus health and dental insurance. Application deadline: Oct. 31, 1993. Target starting date: Jan. 2, 1994. Search Committee, Political Research Associates, 678 Massachusetts Ave., Suite 702, Cambridge, MA 02139. Tel: (617) 661-9313, FAX: (617) 661-0059. Political Research Associates is an equal opportunity employer. People of color and women are strongly urged to apply.

iviva la tortuga!

Visit sustainable development projects working with sea turtles in Latin America.

Earth Island 1.800.859.SAVE

NARAL seeking Field Manager for Midwest region. Grassroots skills and commitment to reproductive rights a must. Call (202) 973-3093 for job description.

ORGANIZER/REPRESENTATIVE wanted for New York-area labor union. Applicants must be bilingual in Spanish and English and live in New York City area. Labor or community organizing background important. Send résumé and references to: **UNION JOB, IN THESE TIMES**, 2040 N. Milwaukee, Chicago, IL 60647.

COMMUNITY JOBS: The Employment Newspaper for the Non-Profit Sector. Join over 50,000 job-seekers in reading a unique monthly publication containing more than 200 new job listings (in Environment, Arts, International, Health, Youth, Civil Rights, Housing, Human Services, etc.). Featuring informative articles, book reviews, resource lists, profiles of non-profit organizations and the people who found them. Contact: **ACCESS**, 50 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108, (617) 720-5627.

AUTHORS WANTED

Leading subsidy book publisher seeks manuscripts of all types: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, scholarly and religious works, etc. Send for booklet Z-89. New authors welcomed. Vantage Press, 516 W 34 St., New York, NY 10001.

▶ BOOKS

ANARCHIST COOKBOOK Available again! \$25 ppd. Barricade Books, Box 1401J, Secaucus, NJ 07096.

COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS, Teleportation, Superbrain function. Incredible Inquiry Catalog. (Stamps) P.O. Box 2207, Garden Valley, ID 83622.

SRI AUROBINDO BOOKS: Integrate Spirit and Matter! Reconcile Religion and Science! Augment Intellect with Experience! World Unity Inspire of Diversity! Free Catalog. **LOTUS LIGHT**, P.O. Box 325 TT, Twin Lakes, WI 53181.

CAXTON BOOKSEARCH. Box 220, Ellison Bay, WI 54210. We'll order or search any book, (800) 288-7724.

"BOY INTO MAN: A Fathers' Guide to Initiation of Teenage Sons," by Bernard Weiner. With script, photos, ceremonial rituals. \$9.95, \$2 tax/shipping. Transformation Press, 197 Bonview, Box T, San Francisco, CA 94110.

▶ PUBLICATIONS

HOW CAN WE LIVE HAPPILY? by E. Haldeman-Julius. A brilliant, modern, practical interpolation of the Epicurean philosophy that happiness is the

JEWISH CURRENTS

November, 1993 issue

"Peace Process Speeds Up", editorial; "Jewish Books for Young Readers", Jane E. Schofer; "Samuel Ornit" Haunch, Paunch and Jowl at 70, John L. Simon; celebrations of Moishe Nadir and Abraham Sutzkever.

Single issue: \$2 plus 75c.
Subscription: \$20 yearly (USA).

JEWISH CURRENTS

Dept. T, Suite 601
22 E. 17 St.
New York, NY 10003

Political and Social Satire!

Music for the Mentally Restless...

Blomberg & Mahaffey

Great Entertainment for Occasions Left of Center
414-962-5089



Jesus Christ: Myth or History?

By Calvin Harley

Did Jesus of Nazareth ever live? Was he a real person, or a mere fictional character which some pious mythicists invented to prove that the Gospels are historical documents? This masterfully researched examination of the evidence will surprise and shock the credulous.

Paper \$4.00 ppd. (USA)

Independent Publications • Box 102 Ridgfield • NJ 07657

chief aim of life, by the late publisher of the famous Little Blue Books. Edited and read by Carl Shapiro. AUDIOCAS-SETTE. Approx. 35 mins., \$7.50 ppd. (USA).

THE CATALOG OF ALTERNATIVES. A catalog with a conscience. Videos, books and words to live by. Wishful Thinking? Video, P.O. Box 296, Florham Park, NJ 07932.

LOVE TRAVELING? Become an independent Travel Consultant. Excellent profits from home. Insider's guide reveals how. Rush \$16.00 to: Zen Tours, Dept-T4, Box 38805, Colorado Springs, CO 80937.

Can you read some Spanish?

Learn MORE reading the news in **Perspectiva magazine**

JUST \$18 FOR 12 ISSUES, \$32 FOR 24 ISSUES (CANADA/MEXICO: \$25 OTHERS: \$35 U.S.) Bilingual glossary in every issue. All articles in intermediate Spanish. Monthly features: world/national news, science, ecology, culture, travel & more! FREE for new subscribers: *Spanish Grammar at a Glance*. Sample: \$2 prepaid.

EDUCATIONAL NEWS SERVICE
Box 177(ITT), So. Hadley, MA 01075
PHONE ORDERS: (413) 538-7127
FAX (413) 534-1712

1994 LABOR HISTORY CALENDAR. 14 photos, \$7.50. IWW, Box 204, Oak Park IL 60303.

THE OLD FART: A magazine for and by curmudgeons. Send \$10 cheque for a one-year subscription to this quarterly publication to: Box 83509, 199 Avenue Rd. Toronto, Canada M5R 3S2 (Tel/FAX 416-975-2614) or send \$20, one for yourself and one for your favorite curmudgeon.

PEOPLE AGAINST RACIST TERROR: bimonthly journal. Sample \$2, subscription \$7.50. PART, Box 1990-ITT, Burbank, CA 91507.

► EDUCATION

LIKE TO READ? Let's talk. 125 students, ages 15 to 50+, discuss in tiny classes. Private, independent. Accredited. Shimer College, Box A-500, Waukegan, IL 60079, (708) 623-8400.

BECOME A DIFFERENT KIND OF LAWYER! 20 years of experience. We prepare you to work in environmental law, civil rights, immigration law, labor law and police miscon-

duct. **PEOPLES COLLEGE OF LAW** now accepting applications (800) 747-6245, extension 40057.

► TRAVEL

EUROPE— only \$169 from East Coast! \$269 from West Coast. \$229-Midwest (when available) NY-LA/SF either way, \$129. LA-Hawaii \$129. Special fares NY-Chicago, Miami or San Juan. AIRHITCH, (212) 864-2000.

EcoTravel ABROAD. Free resource catalog: Transitions Abroad, Box 1300-3710, Amherst, MA 01004-1300.

► ASSOCIATIONS

SCIENTIFIC UNIONISTS FOR TOTAL SOCIALISM. Write DDEC, P.O. Box 3744-T, Grand Rapids, MI 49501-3744. **SMASH POVERTY!** American Party, P. O. Box 14011, North Palm Beach, FL 33408.

THE HUMAN ECOLOGY PARTY—a wholistic political party dedicated to "Health and Freedom for All." To learn more, send \$1.00 to H.E.P., 20 Sunnyside, A-156, Mill Valley, CA 94941, (415) 381-2357.

► FOR RENT

CHICAGO—SMALL OFFICE SPACE available for business or personal use. \$150/month includes utilities. Use of office equipment negotiable. Call Jim Weinstein at (312) 772-0100.

SANCTUARY FOR RENT. Pennsylvania farmhouse on 100 acres for writers or thinkers \$400 week / \$1000 month. (215) 233-3981.

► HEALTH

ABORTING OURSELVES SAFELY! Sources of information on Menstrual Extraction, herbal and vitamin abortions, etc. \$5/SASE: Autonomy, Box 591, Chilmark, MA 02535.

AMAZON MEDICINE/VISIONARY PLANTS, Literature/Art/Elixirs. \$1/info. ROSETTA, P.O. Box 4611 Dept. IT, Berkeley, CA 94704-0611.

► PERSONALS

CONCERNED SINGLES Newsletter links singles concerned about environment, peace, social justice, gender equality, personal growth. Nationwide. All ages. Free sample: Box 555-T, Stockbridge, MA 01262.

ARTISTIC CONNECTIONS—Linking single lovers of the arts. Nationwide. Write IT, Box 116, Chatham, NJ 07928.

SINGLE? INTO OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES? Join us! Nationwide. Information: Natural Connections, Box 655-IT, Pomona, NY 10970.

PAPER FANTASIES MAGAZINE where imaginations meet. Find friends who share your creative interests., SASE: PF-7, Box 269, Loughman, FL 33858-0269.

IN THESE TIMES Classified Ads Work Like Your Own Sales Force.

Word Rates:

95¢ per word / 1-2 issues
85¢ per word / 3-5 issues
80¢ per word / 6-9 issues
75¢ per word / 10-19 issues
65¢ per word / 20+ issues

Display Inch Rates:

\$30 per inch / 1-2 issues
\$28 per inch / 3-5 issues
\$26 per inch / 6-9 issues
\$24 per inch / 10-19 issues
\$22 per inch / 20+ issues

Classified ads must be prepaid. Send your copy, coupon, and payment to:
IN THESE TIMES, Classified Ads,
2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

Enclosed is my check for \$_____ for _____ week(s).

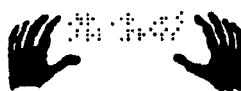
Please indicate desired heading _____

Advertiser _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Our Right To Know Braille Press, Inc.



For blind and print-handicapped persons, **FI - FREEDOM IDEAS INTERNATIONAL**, a quarterly review of minority and independent publications, includes selected articles from **IN THESE TIMES**. Produced by Our Right to Know Braille Press, Inc., on 4-track 15/16 ips cassette tape. A 4-issue subscription costs \$5.

Our Right to Know Braille Press, Inc.
640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217
(313) 842-1804

This publication is available in microform from University Microfilms International.

☐ Please send information about these titles:

Name _____

Company/Institution _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____

Call toll-free 800-521-3044. Or mail inquiry to:
University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Calendar Announcement

Join the 1993 Women's Peace Delegation to Palestine & Israel December 8 - 24. Meet with Palestinian women, experience daily life under occupation, network with Israeli women activists. Contact: Middle East Children's Alliance, 2140 Shattuck Ave., Rm. 207, Berkeley, CA 94704 (510) 548-0542.

Continued from page 40

Thus far, the administration insists that use of Clipper is voluntary, but just *how* voluntary remains unclear. Many alternative encryption devices are already on the market. One encryption program—"Pretty Good Privacy"—is currently available around the world for free. If the use of Clipper remains truly voluntary, who would choose a system that is compromised by its very nature over one that is not? The "voluntary" aspect of the Clipper plan appears to undermine its central law enforcement purpose.

The White House has issued reassurances that it does not plan to introduce legislation to restrict encryption technology. But it may not need to: market forces, not laws, may enable the government to usurp the competition. In order to demonstrate its faith in the new encryption devices, the government has purchased several thousand Clipper units to protect its own "sensitive" but unclassified materials. In the near future, companies and individuals may need to use the devices in order to be able to communicate with the government. Computer manufacturers may therefore be forced to incorporate the Clipper chip in new products in order to sell them in the federal market. The government is counting on these economic pressures to result in the adoption of the Clipper Chip as a de facto industry standard, leaving consumers with few true options.

Ironically, drug lords, hostile foreign governments and organized crime rings—the groups that the government claims are the true targets of the program—will undoubtedly have the resources to circumvent Clipper, whether or not it remains voluntary. According to cryptography expert Whitfield Diffie, the people left most vulnerable by the Clipper chip will be "honest citizens who are trying to keep their politics, their sex lives and their business private."

A number of concerned groups, including the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) and Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility (CPSR), have challenged not only the morality of the government proposal but its legality. Both the ACLU and the EFF have raised concerns that the Clipper proposal may violate Fourth Amendment protections against unreasonable search and seizure and Fifth Amendment rights against self-incrimination and deprivation of property without due process. In essence, they argue, the key-escrow arrangement requires disclosure of an individual's key *before* any crime is committed. In a world where people's personal, political and commercial business has moved off the printed page and onto the computer network, granting the government access to encryption keys may amount to giving it a direct line into your file cabinets and personal correspondence.

CPSR director and Georgetown University law professor

Marc Rotenberg believes that there are even stronger legal arguments against the Clipper plan. "Under the [1986 Electronic Communications Privacy Act], restrictions were placed on the government to avoid excessive abuse of wiretap authority. And under this Clipper proposal restrictions are placed on individuals to avoid excessive privacy," he explains. "As a legal matter, [the proposal] simply stands the wiretap statute on its head."

In addition, the process by which Clipper was created appears to violate both the spirit *and* the letter of the 1987 Computer Security Act, which specifies that a civilian agency, the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), should be charged with developing a commercial encryption standard. Instead, documents obtained by CPSR

through a lawsuit under the Freedom of Information Act indicate that the National Security Agency (NSA), the government's most secretive intelligence agency, was responsible for Clipper's design.

The NSA has been using national security arguments as a pretext to limit and even deter the development of civilian cryptography products, obstructing federal funding for cryptographic research and imposing export restrictions on security-minded applications. For its part, the NIST's Computer System Security and Privacy Advisory Board has issued resolutions questioning the secrecy surrounding the Clipper proposal and pointing out problems—legal and practical—with the current plans.

When considering the government's late-20th-century track record on privacy-enhancing technologies, a disturbing picture emerges of the military's post-Cold War identity crisis and its struggle to control emerging technologies in order to refashion society in its own image. As Rotenberg has noted, "The Clipper proposal is practically the cornerstone of a surveillance state."

Organizations concerned with preserving civil liberties have outlined a number of their own proposals to keep Big Brother at bay. Rotenberg and CPSR have argued for legislative and technical solutions to the problem of protecting privacy in the coming electronic era, as well as the establishment of a governmental agency charged with protecting citizen's privacy. "When the new administration came in we put forward a number of proposals for revisions to privacy law in the United States ... and instead we got this surprising and very much backward-looking proposal," said Rotenberg. "They dusted off a proposal that should have been left on the shelf—that's Clipper in a nutshell. It's obviously provoked a lot of controversy, a lot of opposition, and the right thing to do now is to back off and to move in a different direction."

Aushra Abouzeid is a freelance writer and former intern at *In These Times*.

"The Clipper proposal is practically the cornerstone of a surveillance state."

I N T H E E N D

Big Brother is modeming

By Aushra Abouzeid

Imagine a future in which you could conduct research at the Library of Congress, discuss your taxes with a consultant, meet with colleagues across the world to debate your favorite topics, and vote for your state representative—all without leaving the comfort of your own computer terminal. Now imagine that any direct marketing firm, persistent hacker or business rival could just as

easily discover your browsing list from the library, your financial status and medical records, your interest in Central American politics, and your last vote against an incumbent. As more and more American households are being linked to an "information superhighway," the prospects for high-tech invasions of privacy seem almost limitless.

There is a way to protect this information from intruders—through computer data encryption. Over the past 20 years computer programmers with a penchant for privacy have developed software that can encase personal documents, e-mail communications, telephone conversations and anything else that resides in the digital realm in a numerical labyrinth so complex that even the government's biggest computers would have to sweat for years to break in—if they could do it at all.

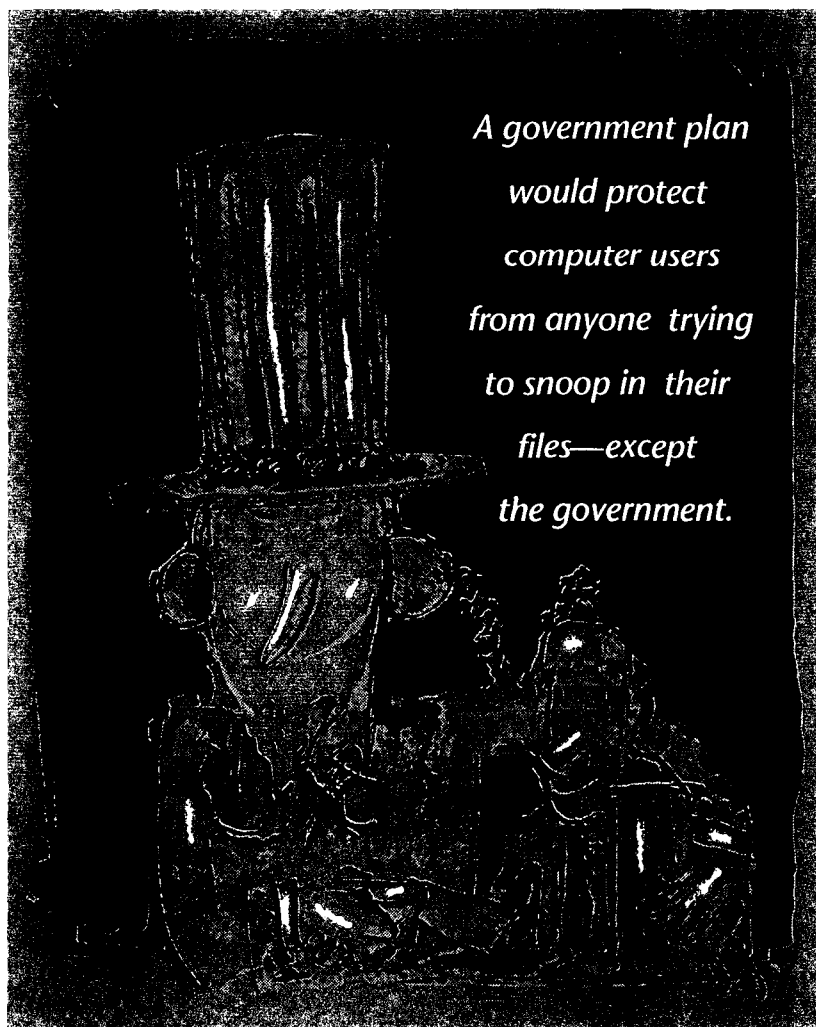
Enter the Clipper chip. The White House is proposing to offer U.S. businesses and individuals a standardized encryption device. The tamper-proof computer chips, whose inner workings remain a closely guarded secret, can encode voice and computer communications so that only the sender and intended receiver who possess the keys can decode the messages.

But there is one hitch: the White House plan includes a provision that will allow law enforcement agents the means to access all Clipper-encoded data. The government, in short, would protect computer users from anyone trying to snoop in their files—except the government itself. No wonder the proposal has computer corporations, scientists and civil libertarians in an uproar.

According to the proposal, every key to every Clipper device will be divided into two parts, and the key halves will reside in two independent escrow agencies for "safe keeping." The agencies will then be required to hand over the key halves to law enforcement agents presenting a court-ordered search warrant—easily circumventing the privacy protections that encryption is supposed to provide.

The government claims this proposal will "improve security and privacy ... while meeting the legitimate needs of law enforcement." But Clipper critics aren't convinced. After all, government intelligence agencies hardly have a pristine record when it comes to questions of privacy—from the FBI wiretapping of Martin Luther King and COINTELPRO's disruption of left groups in the '60s to the Bureau's illegal infiltration of CISPES in the '80s.

Continued on page 39



*A government plan
would protect
computer users
from anyone trying
to snoop in their
files—except
the government.*